



# THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

## Bevan Dufty's News: 'I'm Having a Baby!'

Gay Supervisor and Lesbian Friend Decide to Make a Family

By Liz Highleyman

Having a baby is hardly revolutionary, but District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty is destined to put his own unique stamp on it.

A gay man, Dufty announced in April that he is partnering with a lesbian friend, Rebecca Goldfader, to create a family. The couple plan to move under the same roof and raise the child together, while remaining open to other relationships.

"I'm having a baby!" enthused Dufty in a phone call to the *Voice*. "And we're looking for a place in Noe Valley."

He and Goldfader met at an exercise class about eight years ago. It wasn't long before they discovered they shared the same dream. "We each wanted to have a family," says Goldfader. "We're dear friends, and as we got to know each other, we decided to do it." As an ob-gyn nurse practitioner, Goldfader had "lots of connections to help us start the process."

Dufty, 51, and Goldfader, who will turn 40 this fall, first tried donor insemination. When that didn't work, they embarked on the arduous process of fertility treatment. After a year and a half of trying to conceive, *in vitro* fertilization finally did the



Supervisor Bevan Dufty and longtime friend Rebecca Goldfader are not only shopping for baby clothes in Noe Valley. They're looking for a new home—where they can share the joys of parenting their first child, due in October.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

trick. Though they support adoption, both found it important to try for a genetically related child. The couple expect a baby girl in October.

"We bought her first outfit at Small Frys this weekend," Dufty gushes. "We're discussing what type of baby carrier to buy, what type of stroller... I hear there are some pretty luxurious strollers on 24th Street."

The coming fall will bring not only the birth of Goldfader and Dufty's daughter, but it's also the height of the campaign season. Dufty plans to "campaign hard" for election to a second four-year term as

supervisor, but being a good father is his top priority.

"I intend to be a very active, engaged co-parent," he says, adding that he has no plans to run for State Assembly when Mark Leno is termed out.

"Ideally, this would have happened a year ago, before the re-election campaign, but pregnancy is one of those life experiences you take when it comes," says Goldfader.

In this day and age, gay men and lesbians raising children is pretty common.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

## Church Seeks Funds for 'House of Sarah'

Congregation Plans a Shelter for Homeless Women and Children

By Corrie M. Anders

A church that has quietly ministered in Noe Valley for four decades has launched a \$5 million fundraising effort to build a multilevel addition that would provide temporary housing for homeless women and their children.

The ambitious proposal is the vision of the Church at San Francisco, the bright blue house of worship located at the corner of Church and 28th streets.

If the fundraising effort is successful, the church plans to start construction in 2009 and add three additional floors to its current one-story structure. The expansion would include 17 units—with each space able to accommodate a mother and two children.

The facility, to be known as the House of Sarah, would serve as a refuge for women who may have drifted into homelessness because of substance-abuse issues, lost jobs, or lost support of husbands or boyfriends. (Sarah was the biblical wife who was scorned for her early inability to bear a child.)

The women would live in the facility

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

## Local Parks Get As and Bs But Still Need Work

By Lorraine Sanders

The report cards are in. *Drumroll, please.* The good news? Noe Valleyans have reason to be proud of the neighborhood's three parks: Both Douglass Playground and the Upper Noe Recreation Center scored A's and Noe Courts received a B on this year's Playground Report Card, a citywide project of the Neighborhood Parks Council. In fact, District 8 scored higher than any other district for overall playground safety and maintenance.

But Noe Valley residents say improvements to the local parks and playgrounds are still needed. In fact, the A grade bestowed upon Upper Noe Recreation Center surprised Olga Milan-Howells, who has been working with the Upper Noe Neighbors association to pursue changes and upgrades at the Day Street center for over a year.

"I was a bit dismayed with the A," says Milan-Howells. "But I wasn't looking just at the play structure, but at the park as a whole."

Anyone who's lived in Noe Valley for any length of time knows that plans to renovate the recreation center have been bandied about for years. But lack of funding and the usual red tape associated with



Rain, mud, and a large fallen tree kept most families out of Douglass Playground during the wettest March in 102 years, but April wildflowers promised rebirth for this and other Noe Valley parks. Meanwhile, park users renewed efforts to speed up planned renovations at Noe Courts and Upper Noe Recreation Center.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

planning, designing, and constructing public spaces have made the process a slow one.

Milan-Howells, who used to take her two children to play at the center's playground until her son hit his head on a

piece of concrete protruding from underneath the slide, has been organizing with other concerned parents to renew efforts for park upgrades. Through a combination of community funding efforts, volunteer labor, and the city's capital im-

provement program, Milan-Howells and other members of Upper Noe Neighbors would like to see general improvements to the ball field and playground, as well

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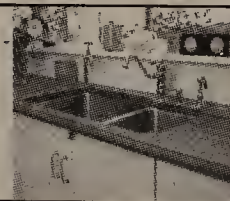
**Young Voices.** St. Philip's Children and Junior Choir, directed by Carlton White and assisted by Johanna Hirota, performed at the annual San Francisco Archdiocesan Choral Festival held March 23 at Archbishop Riordan High School. Concert highlights included "Panis Angelicus," "Amazing Grace," and a warm-up exercise with the tongue-twisting words "999 nuns interned in an Indiana nunnery." The choir, which practices 45 minutes a week, is made up of kids from first- through seventh-grade. *Photo by Paula Whitehead*

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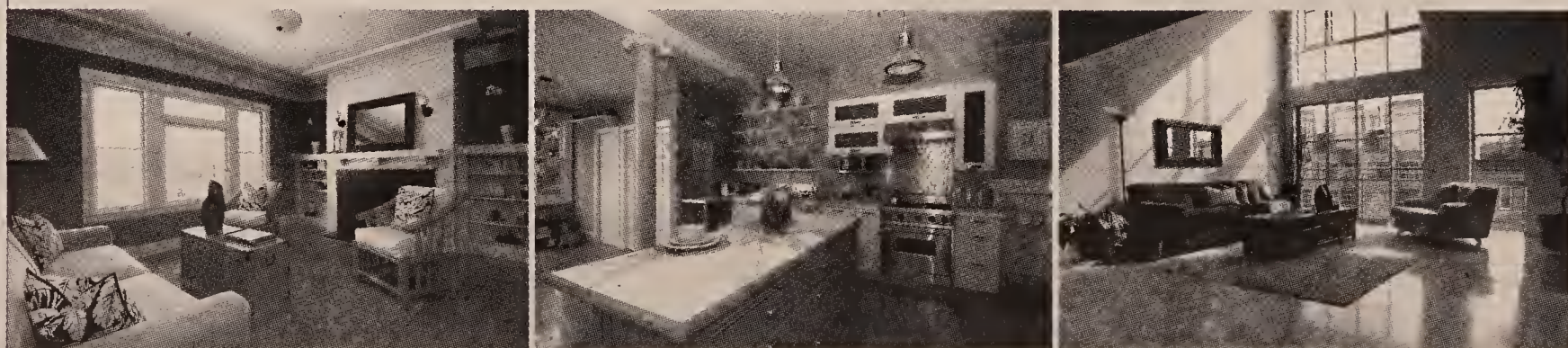
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# Noe Valley Democratic Club



June 6<sup>th</sup> Election Endorsements

## State and Federal Candidates & Initiatives



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Dianne Feinstein



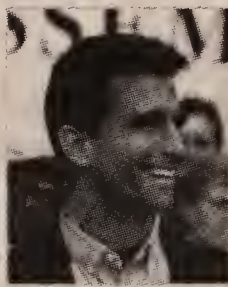
US Congress, 8th District  
Nancy Pelosi



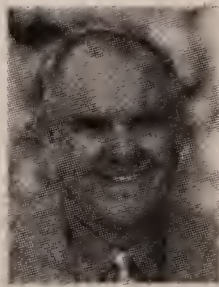
Governor  
Phil Angelides



Lt. Governor  
Jackie Speier



State Assembly, District 13  
Mark Leno



State Senate, District 8  
Mike Nevin

Attorney General: Jerry Brown

Secretary of State: Debra Bowen

Insurance Commissioner: Cruz Bustamante

Controller: No recommendation

Superintendent of Public Instruction: Jack O'Connell

Treasurer: Bill Lockyer

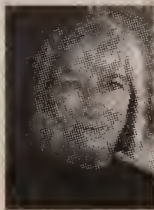
Prop 81	Library Construction and Renovation Bond	Yes
Prop 82	Public Preschool Education Tax on Incomes over \$400,000 for individuals; \$800,000 for couples	Yes

## Local Candidates & Initiatives

### Democratic County Central Committee



David Campos



Gerry Crowley



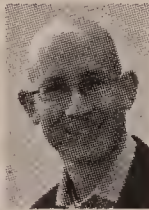
Michael Goldstein



Robert Haaland



Leslie Katz



Rafael Mandelman

### Superior Court Judge



Lillian Sing



Laura Spanjian



Holli Thier



Scott Wiener



No Photo  
Available

Bill Barnes



No Photo  
Available

Sue Bierman



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Joseph Julian

Prop A	Additional Funding for Homicide Prevention Services	Yes
Prop B	Eviction Disclosure Ordinance	No Recommendation
Prop C	Appointing Elected Officials to the Transbay Joint Powers Authority	No Recommendation
Prop D	Zoning Changes to Limit Services at Laguna Honda Hospital and Other Residential Health Care Facilities	No

The Noe Valley Democratic Club meets on the third Wednesday of each month, 7:30pm, at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.

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Far right: **Mollie Poe** – SOMA/South Beach Top Producer

Back row: **Bill Kitchen** – Upper Market Top Producer  
**Robin Hubinsky** – West of Twin Peaks Top Producer



# Honoring the Plug That Saved the Day

Photos by Pamela Gerard



A crowd of several hundred people, many of whom had attended pre-dawn ceremonies at Lotta's Fountain on Market Street, showed up at 7 a.m. on Tuesday, April 18, to help city fire officials, including Assistant Deputy Fire Chief Lorrie Kalos (shown at left), re-gild the fireplug at Church and 20th streets. The hydrant was honored for supplying water to quench the "Ham and Eggs Fire" caused by the Great Earthquake of 1906. After the early-morning festivities, many 100th-anniversary celebrants returned home to Noe Valley, seeking breakfasts of ham and eggs.

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**Third row:** Andrew Roth, Rebecca Ford, Harry Clark, Sue Borsian, Faye Dibachi, Linda Saraf, Laura Kaufman, Jennifer Kauffman, Anna Spathis, Joan Loeffler

**Back row:** Bassam Salameh, Jack Bernstine, Cathy Kline Saunders, David Antman, Else Townsend, Michael Salstein, Suzanne Frank, Jerry Wang, Jim Prevo, Vicki Valandra, John Zhou, Wes Freas

Not pictured: Chris Foley, Tim Hawko



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## THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

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The *Voice* welcomes your letters, photos, and manuscripts, particularly on topics relating to Noe Valley. All items should include your name, address, and phone number, and may be edited for brevity or clarity. (Unsigned manuscripts will not be considered for publication.) Unsolicited contributions will be returned only if accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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# LETTERS 39¢

## A Plea for Pedestrian Responsibility

Editor:

I must speak regarding the state of 24th Street traffic, on weekends and at other times. It's a pedestrian mecca, with its mix of shops, fresh produce, and all sorts of necessities. But last summer, I watched a boy of about 9 at Noe and 24th streets, struggling to figure out how to get across the intersection. His face was a mixture of helplessness and determination.

The mix of cars and people on 24th Street is a disconcerting reality. The more I experience it, the more I think two things: First, wouldn't it be great if this street could become a pedestrian mall, with no cars? And second, the behavior of pedestrians here is going to cause an accident.

I believe the current trend of pedestrians not bothering to interact with cars at intersections causes a great deal of stress for drivers. Now, I know the law. Cars have to yield. But when they have to yield for an indefinite amount of time—and depending on whether they are driving on 24th Street or trying to cross it, possibly a quite lengthy amount of time—it creates a feeling of desperation for drivers. I know this feeling. I use City CarShare, and occasionally I have to be a driver on or across 24th Street.

The pedestrian sense of entitlement often leads to chaos at our intersections. Drivers can't keep track of who has stopped first at an intersection and have to focus on when or if they can ever get across—especially if it has been their turn for 10 minutes. Often, they try to dash across at the next available moment, which many times is at the same time as

another car. Meanwhile, oblivious pedestrians are stepping off every curb.

The worst thing I see is when a car has left the stop sign and is stranded in the middle of the intersection while people continue to stroll into the crosswalks in front and in back of the car. This delays up to three other vehicles and creates mass confusion at every block all the way down the street.

Seeing the boy hesitating on that beautiful summer day put the fear of God into me. Crossing the street safely shouldn't be that difficult for a kid. We can't control the traffic and we can't control the drivers. But we can alter our behavior to create a better situation.

We have to accept that we don't yet have a pedestrian mall. We as pedestrians need to communicate with drivers, assess the intersection as we approach it, and share responsibility for keeping the traffic moving smoothly. This summer, let's create a new standard for being a pedestrian in Noe Valley, which addresses our unique situation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Gwen Sanderson

Via e-mail



The Scheerer mansion at 450 Liberty Street, built in the 1880s, once commanded the hill separating Noe and Eureka valleys. Letter-writer Elliott Pisor points out that the house faced 20th Street and had its carriage entrance on Liberty. Now the property is occupied by a complex of townhomes whose interior courtyard is where the Scheerer stables used to be.

1963 photo by Lorry Moon, courtesy San Francisco Library

## Old and New Fingerprints on Liberty Street

Editor:

Thanks for your March repeat of the Florence Holub column about 450 Liberty Street and Audrey Rodgers' heroic efforts resulting in the protection of Dolores Heights ["Footprints and Fingerprints," Florence's Family Album, March 2006]. Now I see why she and Mrs. Pena used to tease me about trading their houses for mine at 450 Liberty.

Actually, the old mansion [known today as the Joseph Scheerer mansion] fronted on 20th Street. The 450 Liberty side had a 150-foot-long white picket fence with an opening for horses and carriages to enter the back of the block-long property. The stables there became a fire victim years before the present-day brick and

shingle houses went up, and the stables were replaced with a small private park.

The two Norfolk Island pines referred to in the article are now over 100 feet tall, and we almost lost one to a beetle attack in the drought of the mid-1980s. At the last minute, it was saved by the U.C. Forestry School.

Now that I know what Audrey and friends went through 40 years ago to ensure that the architecture of my house and grounds would be unique, I'll never sell.

Elliott Pisor

Liberty Street

*Editor's Note: A reader mailed the Voice the following tribute to Albert Monferrato, written by family and friends. We thank them and encourage others who have lost someone in Noe Valley to feel free to send us their reminiscences or short obituary (fewer than 500 words). We will try our best to print it in an upcoming issue. Please include your name and phone number, so we may contact you if we have questions. E-mail editor@noevalleyvoice.com or write Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114.*

## Albert Monferrato, A Painter With Passion

Noe Valley resident Albert Carmen Monferrato passed away suddenly and reluctantly in his home on Feb. 1. He was 62. Monferrato is survived by his sister Angela, of Colorado; his stepmother Anna Maria, of Philadelphia; and hundreds of admirers of his oil paintings.

A master of plein-air and trompe l'oeil painting, he beautifully and effectively captured the hilltop vistas of San Francisco neighborhoods where the sunshine radiated year-round. He studied painting at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art in Philadelphia and the Academia di Belle Arti in Florence, Italy, before graduating from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1994. A printmaker for many years, his work has appeared in galleries throughout the U.S., including those in Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles, and Santa Fe. His most recent exhibit of paintings was at the Atrium Gallery in San Francisco.

His prolific work ethic and passion for life inspired others to be as vivacious and focused as he was. Asked why he had no patience for a nine-to-five career, he replied: "Just look around you. I don't have time for that. Do you see this beauty? There's something great here, and I need to paint it. And I'm just getting started."

A celebration commemorating Monferrato's life was held in February at the Valley Tavern on 24th Street.

## LETTERS to the EDITOR

THE VOICE welcomes your letters to the editor. Write the *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail [editor@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:editor@noevalleyvoice.com). Please include your name, address, and phone number. (Anonymous letters will not be considered for publication.) Be aware that letters may be edited for brevity or clarity. We look forward to hearing from you.



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## Dufty Going to Be a Father

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

However, you don't often find a politician willing to experiment so freely with his social and living arrangements.

"This is something I've wanted to do for a very long time," Dufty says. "Neither of us had partners, so we looked at each other and said, 'Let's do this together.'"

Currently, Dufty and Goldfader are searching for a duplex to share—ideally in Noe Valley, but they will consider anywhere in District 8—and they know the hunt won't be easy.

"It's slim pickings in this district," admits Goldfader, who now lives in Bernal Heights.

"Noe Valley is a great neighborhood,

with so many kids and lots of gay and lesbian parents," says Dufty, a Castro District resident. But finding a suitable building that will not entail eviction of tenants is "like looking for a needle in a haystack," he laments, adding, "Maybe someone will read this and help us out."

As Goldfader and Dufty embark on their co-parenting partnership, what about new romantic partners for either of them?

"Our priority is to have a healthy, happy baby and create a home around that, then try to take the next steps to have relationships," Dufty says. Goldfader adds that there's "room for a loving partner" for each of them, but they acknowledge that respective potential lovers may be wary of Dufty and Goldfader's commitment to each other, as well as the newcomer's undefined role in the family.

Without the benefits of traditional marriage, Goldfader and Dufty must do some

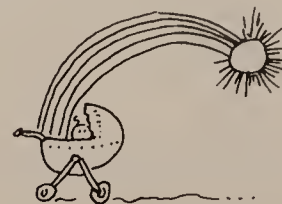
extra legwork to clarify their legal responsibilities to each other and their child. Says Dufty, "Family laws have dragged behind the reality of family structures today."

Goldfader, who is a partner in her medical practice and a Pilates instructor, notes that they have received a great deal of support from coworkers, friends, and family. "Bevan and I are fortunate to walk in a lot of different worlds," she says. "We're looking at this pregnancy as a real opportunity to create a family across the spectrum of the rainbow."

Dufty envisions creating a unique and diverse home environment, much like the one his single mother—a writer ensconced in the New York City jazz community—provided for him. "I hope our home is like a fun salon, mixing food, politics, and good causes," he says. "I think that will be a great environment to raise our daughter."

He adds that being open about the challenges of dealing with fertility problems and having a baby after age 50 has offered rewards of a different kind. "So many people have come forward because we've been open about our fertility issues, about being two single people trying to make a family," he says. "Fertility issues can make you feel really isolated. But people shouldn't feel alone."

"Each year at Halloween I sit in front of Small Frys, greeting the neighborhood kids," Dufty concludes. "I get kind of choked up thinking that next year our little girl is going to be out there dressed up, too." ■




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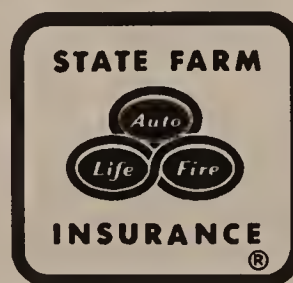


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# Church Hopes to Build a Shelter for Homeless Women

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for six months to two years. During that time, they would receive drug and alcohol counseling and life-skills training designed to integrate them back into mainstream society.

The training would give the women the capability to handle things many people take for granted: how to apply for identification cards or driver's licenses, how to get social security cards and credit reports, how to dress for interviews and write a resume, and how to find an apartment and pay bills. The residents also would take twice-weekly self-esteem classes. Their children would be enrolled in public schools.

"It's all a part of integrating them back into society," says Rev. Joesiah Bell, 59, pastor of the nondenominational church.

Although homeless women could live at the church home for two years, Bell says he expects they would be back on their feet in less than that. "We're looking at six months to a year," he says.

The first phase of the House of Sarah effort is to raise \$65,000 to pay for architectural plans and construction specifications. Bell says he expects the overall fundraising effort to take anywhere from 12 to 18 months, followed by up to two years for the permit approval process.

"So we have roughly about three years before we can stick a shovel in the ground," Bell says.

No official plans or permit requests have been filed with the city. But news of the proposal started to attract public attention last month when the church posted an architectural drawing of the proposed expansion on its front facade.

The rendering by Asian Neighborhood Design, a nonprofit corporation based in San Francisco, showed a contemporary-style addition sitting atop the building's familiar royal-blue base.

David Gluck, a 28th Street resident who lives two houses from the church, says he hopes the organizers will involve neighbors early in the process to address any concerns they might have about establishment of a homeless facility.

"I think the Noe Valley community is a very progressive community and would probably support the intention of what they're trying to accomplish," Gluck says.

The president of a local neighborhood association says the church's proposal has



The Church at San Francisco, which sits at the corner of Church and 28th streets, recently posted plans for a three-story addition that would potentially house homeless families.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

not progressed far enough for her group to take a position.

"It would be a pretty serious change to that corner, so I would expect there to be a need for a lot of public dialogue," says Vicki Rosen of Upper Noe Neighbors. "For now, we're doing a wait-and-see kind of thing."

Bell says the proposal is indeed in its formative stages, and that the church would welcome discourse with its neighbors. The church so far has gotten "mixed feedback" from nearby residents and businesses, Bell says, with some neighbors applauding the plan and others asking, "Why does it have to come here?"

Homeless women and children are currently rare on the streets of Noe Valley. But that could change, Bell says.

"Just because we're out here in Noe Valley doesn't mean we can stick our heads in the sand," Bell says. "The problem is coming to us, and I think we should be proactive."

Bell says the church has already devised strategies to prevent potential problems, such as people congregating outside the church or male friends of the women coming around and disturbing the tenants. He also welcomes the public's help.

"I want to invite people to come and work with us," says Bell. "If they see a

problem, my door is always open."

The genesis for the House of Sarah came soon after Bell arrived from Seattle in 1996, as the church's new pastor. While working in a San Francisco neighborhood center, Bell says he discovered there were "plenty of programs for men, but hardly any programs for women, and especially for women and their children."

In his first year, an effort to set up a city homeless shelter ran into vehement opposition from local residents, and the idea was shelved. "I decided that being a new pastor, it wasn't going to be my battle cry," he says.

The need for housing assistance did not dissipate, however, says Bell, who has a master's degree in education and has worked extensively with underprivileged children. "There needs to be something for the women of our city. The majority of women on the street are not there because of drugs. It's because they lost their jobs or husbands, or their live-in

boyfriends left. And they find themselves homeless."

Bell says the church has been a fixture at its present location since 1965—initially with a mostly African-American congregation that has given way today to parishioners who primarily are white or Latino. The church has an ongoing program of providing food and clothing for the needy, he says, and currently is collecting clothes for shipment to Kenya and El Salvador.

Previously called Holiness Temple in Christ, the Church at San Francisco can seat 300 people, Bell says. The size of the congregation is not known, however, because "we don't count our membership."

Bell says visitors can drop by 1596 Church Street or phone the church at 415-642-0302. ■

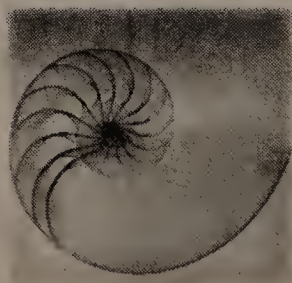


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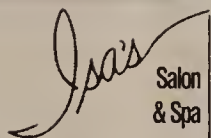


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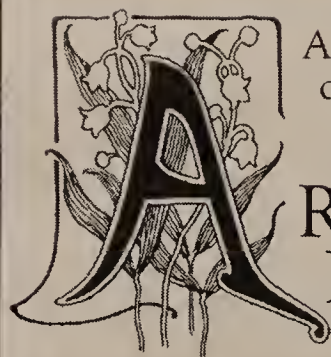


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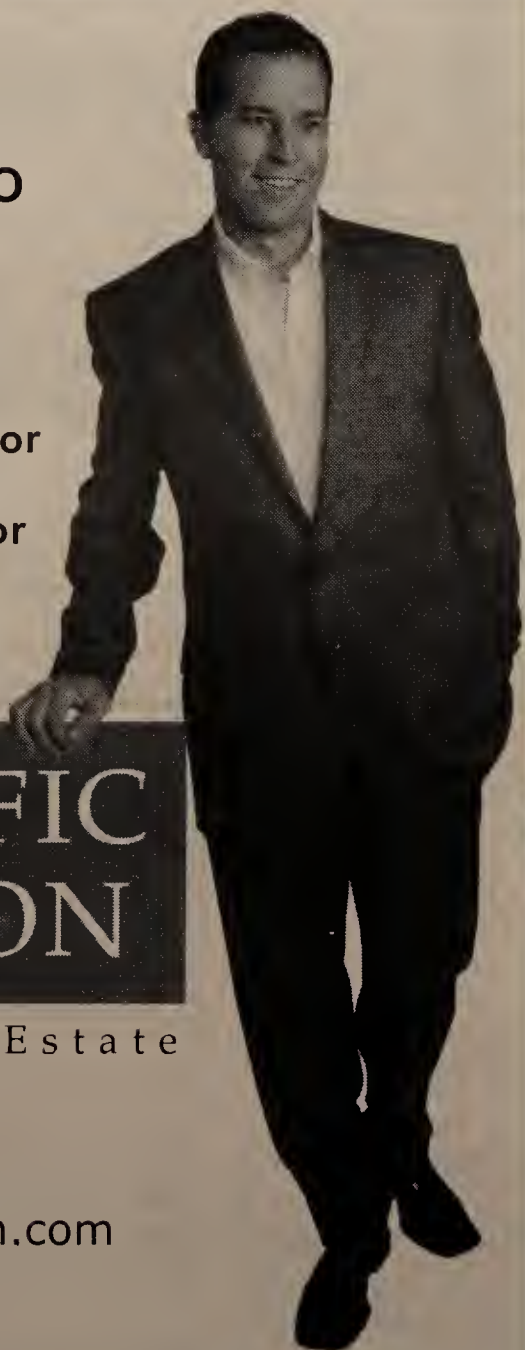
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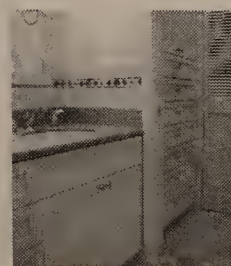
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## Noe's Parks Better Than Most, But Still Need Renovation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

as additional amenities like a toddler's toilet, diaper-changing stations, child-friendly stairs leading onto the recreation center's stage, and better padding for the gym's vault.

The Recreation and Park Department is aware of the park's need for seismic and safety upgrades and has a \$11 million multiphase project under way to address these needs. The plans call for renovations to the recreation center, its restrooms and basketball gym, as well as the outdoor play area. Included in the project are improvements to the entrances, which are now loosely secured with chains and quite easy for children to wiggle through, new playground structures, better surfacing, an expanded dog play area, softball bleachers with disabled access, new gates, and new fencing. An expanded dog play area was completed last summer. The city estimates construction will begin in July and continue through 2007.

### Cleanups Continue at Noe Courts

Similar efforts are under way at Noe Courts park and playground, located at the corner of Douglass and 24th streets. Regular visitors complain that the lack of fencing endangers both children and dogs that frequent the park.

"I started taking my son to Noe Courts when he was a baby, and in talking to other people there, there was a kind of general sense of dissatisfaction," says Laura Norman. "Not only with keeping the dogs out [of the playground area], but keeping the kids in."

Norman joined with a dog walker and other residents to form the Friends of Noe Courts. Thus far, they have worked with the city to plan improvements that would increase fencing around the park, improve the landscaping and drainage system, and add a bathroom.

"We've got an approved design, and we've got a general idea of what it's going to cost," says Lizzy Hirsch, the Recreation and Park Department manager overseeing the Noe Courts project.

Not surprisingly, money is the crucial factor in whether the plans move forward. Although \$175,000 has already been allotted for the project, Hirsch estimates that an additional \$225,000 is still needed.

Fundraising efforts for the park facelift are currently under way through the Friends of Noe Courts. The group hopes to have enough money to begin construction by the fall.

In the meantime, dedicated neighborhood residents have spent several Saturday mornings this spring working to improve the playground and park.

"I like to see it look cared for," says Cathy Dompe, a longtime neighborhood resident who has been an instrumental volunteer in the park cleanup effort. "It's pride in your community."

Dompe and a faithful group of six or eight residents have weeded, spread mulch, and planted new plants. Bi-monthly workdays are scheduled until the end of the year. The next is May 13. Anyone is welcome to join the effort.

### Parks Council Invites Help

At Douglass Playground, an extraordinarily wet spring has been the biggest problem. In addition to the soggy, muddy ground, a huge tree has fallen in the back of the park. At press time, the city had not responded to *Voice* inquiries about plans to remove the tree.

But similar problems are affecting many city parks. In fact, 14 city parks have been swamped in the recent downpours, according to the Neighborhood Parks Council's Helen Johnson.

She says there are many ways for Noe Valleyans to participate in improvement efforts at neighborhood parks.

Through the ParkScan program, residents can report problems at city parks to the Neighborhood Parks Council, which will then pass them on to Rec and Park. Just go to the web site [www.sfneighborhoodparks.org](http://www.sfneighborhoodparks.org).

To join the Upper Noe Neighbors and learn more about their efforts at Upper Noe Recreation Center, contact Olga Milan-Howells at [olgahowells@email.com](mailto:olgahowells@email.com). Anyone interested in joining the ongoing Noe Courts workdays may contact Cathy Dompe at [cmtdompe@pacbell.net](mailto:cmtdompe@pacbell.net). For more information about the fundraising efforts at the park, e-mail [noecourts@gmail.com](mailto:noecourts@gmail.com). ■



**Did You Hear That?** If you live anywhere near 25th and Dolores streets, last fall you may have heard a very loud and late-night outdoor recording session by the artists pictured above, accompanied by dozens of other Bay Area musicians and performers. The album *Eye of the Storm: Love and Rage from the Bay to the Gulf* was produced by Slanty Studios ("named for our term of endearment for the hill on 25th Street, Slanty Hill"), as part of a Hurricane Katrina relief effort. The studio is in a room in what has become a house of music on 25th Street. Musician/engineer James Caran (standing, center) is the studio's founder and was the co-producer on the album. Also in the mix was Patti Cobb (right), who teaches music, coaches teen bands, and with husband Bruce owns the house that holds the studio. Brian Rodvien (left) is a percussionist and the business-minded member of the gang. He, Cobb, and Caran have recently launched a new venture: a record label called Free Measure Records. "We put together music with heart and honesty," says Cobb, "and we're dedicated to helping musicians reach their audience." The label's first artist is soul singer Vernon Bush (seated), and Bush's album release concert will be celebrated right here in the neighborhood, too. Bush will perform songs from his new CD, *Go for the Ride*, on Saturday, May 27, 7:30 p.m., at the Noe Valley Music Series in the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street. Don't be surprised if he has a whole house of musicians with him.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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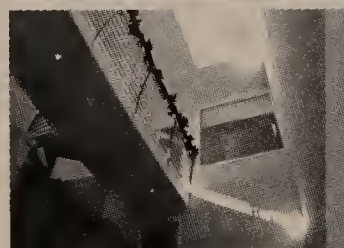
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# The Cost of Living in Noe

## Market Relaxes a Bit

By Corrie M. Anders

Though it's still a million-dollar neighborhood, Noe Valley's housing market showed signs of moderation in March.

Eleven single-family homes closed escrow during the month, according to Zephyr Real Estate, which supplies monthly sales data to the *Voice*. The March total was one higher than in February, but five fewer than a year earlier during the red-hot seller's market.

Nine of the 11 homes cost more than \$1 million—keeping up a three-year-long trend—and helped pushed the average house price in the neighborhood to \$1.2 million.

But new homeowners in March took nearly six weeks to close escrow—two to three weeks more than in the past. Buyers also cut back on the amount they were willing to overpay for a home in Noe Valley. A year ago, they offered about 8 per-

cent more than the asking price (16 percent more for condos). But this March, buyers sweetened the deal with a “mere” 6 percent extra.

The housing market in Noe Valley has been booming for the last five years. But in the past few months, rising mortgage interest rates—coupled with years of stratospheric appreciation that has made homes unaffordable for many would-be owners—have started to tamp down sales.

Randall Kostick, Zephyr's general sales manager, says this spring's sales activity is similar to that of three years ago.

“There was not a great amount of appreciation [in 2003], but there was a reasonable turnover of property,” says Kostick. “It was not a difficult year for sellers and a good year for buyers.”

The most expensive property in March 2006 sold for \$2 million. The four-bedroom, 3½-bath home, with almost 3,700 square feet of living space, is located in the 1200 block of Diamond Street between 26th and Cesar Chavez streets.

Six condominiums sold in March at an average sales price of slightly more than \$1 million.

The costliest, selling for \$1.5 million, was a three-bedroom, three-bath, 2,200-square-foot unit in the 800 block of Clipper Street near Grand View Avenue. ■

### Noe Valley Rents\*\*

Type of Unit	Number in Sample	Range of Rents April 2006	Average April 2006	Average A Year Ago
Studio	5	\$1,050 – \$1,200	\$1,170 / mo.	\$1,030 / mo.
1-bedroom	21	\$1,100 – \$4,455	\$1,791 / mo.	\$1,472 / mo.
2-bedroom	21	\$1,700 – \$5,045	\$2,724 / mo.	\$1,874 / mo.
3-bedroom	11	\$2,450 – \$5,245	\$3,735 / mo.	\$2,750 / mo.
4+-bedroom	2	\$4,150 – \$8,500	\$6,325 / mo.	\$5,000 / mo.

\*\* This survey was based on a sample of 60 Noe Valley listings appearing on [www.craigslist.com](http://www.craigslist.com) April 6 to April 15, 2006. NVV 5106

### Noe Valley Home Sales\*

Total Sales	No.	Low Price (\$)	High Price (\$)	Average Price (\$)	Avg. Days on Market	Sale Price As % of List Price
Single-family homes						
March 2006	11	\$785,000	\$2,000,000	\$1,201,545	35	106%
Feb. 2006	10	\$827,500	\$2,100,000	\$1,415,650	20	99%
March 2005	16	\$831,000	\$2,662,000	\$1,569,000	26	108%
Condominiums						
March 2006	6	\$610,000	\$1,502,000	\$1,094,333	46	106%
Feb. 2006	3	\$640,000	\$1,280,000	\$1,050,000	19	113%
March 2005	7	\$695,000	\$1,351,500	\$947,786	21	116%
2- to 4-unit buildings						
March 2006	3	\$1,321,000	\$1,706,000	\$1,492,000	21	106%
Feb. 2006	3	\$1,150,000	\$2,156,000	\$1,592,167	53	103%
March 2005	8	\$1,175,000	\$2,099,000	\$1,444,250	35	108%
5+-unit buildings						
March 2006	0	—	—	—	—	—
Feb. 2006	1	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	118	95%
March 2005	1	\$1,530,000	\$1,530,000	\$1,530,000	24	99%

\* Sales figures include all Noe Valley home sales completed during the month. In this survey, Noe Valley is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 22nd, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The *Voice* thanks Zephyr Real Estate ([www.zephyrsf.com](http://www.zephyrsf.com)) for supplying the sales data. NVV 5106

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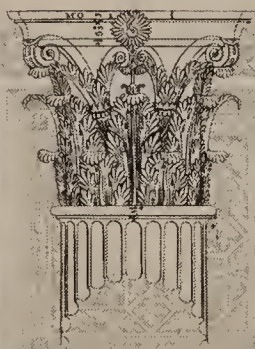
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	<a href="http://www.ci.sf.ca.us/sfdpw/trees">www.ci.sf.ca.us/sfdpw/trees</a>	415-695-2017
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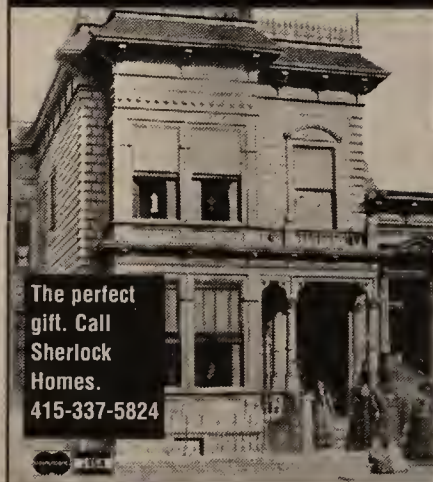
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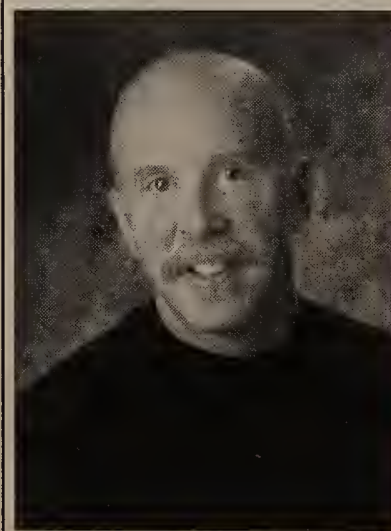
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# POLICE BEAT

Police Beat is a roundup of crimes and other police incidents in Noe Valley. "Noe Valley" is defined as the area bordered by Grand View, 21st, Guerrero, and 30th streets. The March 2006 crime log was culled from incident reports filed at Mission and Ingleside police stations.

**Wednesday, March 1**

Burglary of Residence, Forcible Entry: Reported 8:15 and 8:45 a.m., 900 block of Castro Street  
Threats Against Life: Reported 10:45 a.m., 3500 block of 25th Street  
Planting/Cultivating Marijuana: Reported 10:45 a.m., 3700 block of 23rd Street; arrest, booked  
Battery: Reported noon, 1500 block of Sanchez Street  
Malicious Mischief: Reported 8:30 p.m., first block of Chattanooga Street

**Thursday, March 2**

Burglary of Apartment House, Attempted Forcible Entry: Reported 8 a.m., 200 block of Duncan Street  
Grand Theft from a Building: Reported 12:30 p.m., 3900 block of 24th Street; arrest  
Burglary of Apartment House, Forcible Entry: Reported 1:30 p.m., 1300 block of Noe Street  
Parole Violation: Reported 1:45 p.m., 3600 block of 21st street; arrest, booked  
Grand Theft of Property: Reported 9 p.m., 3500 block of 21st Street

**Friday, March 3**

Grand Theft Bicycle: Reported 7:30 a.m., first block of Duncan Street  
Counterfeiting Coins or Notes: Reported 11 a.m., 4100 block of 24th Street  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism of Vehicles: Reported 2 p.m., Sanchez and 25th streets  
Battery: Reported 8:30 p.m., 29th and Dolores streets

**Saturday, March 4**

Robbery, Bodily Force: Reported 12:30 p.m., 22nd and Church streets  
Burglary, Residence Under Construction, Forcible Entry: Reported 2 p.m., 4300 block of 26th Street  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 8:30 p.m., 2000 block of Castro Street

**Sunday, March 5**

Malicious Mischief, Vandalism of Vehicles: Reported 3 p.m., 1800 block of Church Street  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism of Vehicles: Reported 7:35 p.m., 24th and Dolores streets

**How to Contact the SFPD**

Noe Valley residents and merchants are invited to attend police-community meetings held monthly in the Mission and Ingleside police districts. Ingleside meetings take place on the third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., at Ingleside Station, 1 Sgt. John Young Lane, off the 2000 block of San Jose Avenue. Mission community meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month, 6 p.m., at Mission Station, 630 Valencia Street near 17th Street. Noe Valleyans who live or work north of Cesar Chavez Street (within the Mission Police District) may phone Mission Station at 558-5400 or e-mail [SFPDMissionStation@ci.sf.ca.us](mailto:SFPDMissionStation@ci.sf.ca.us). To report anonymously on drugs, gangs, or other crimes, call Mission Station's hotline at 575-4444. For online reporting, go to [www.sfgov.org/sitelpolice](http://www.sfgov.org/sitelpolice). Residents and merchants in Upper Noe Valley—south of Cesar Chavez Street—may contact Ingleside Station by calling 404-4000 or e-mailing [SFPDInglesideStation@ci.sf.ca.us](mailto:SFPDInglesideStation@ci.sf.ca.us). The Ingleside anonymous tip line is 587-8984. To sign up for Ingleside Station's daily crime e-newsletter, e-mail Captain Paul Chignell at [Paul\\_Chignell@ci.sf.ca.us](mailto:Paul_Chignell@ci.sf.ca.us). To report a crime in progress, call 911. To report a non-emergency situation in San Francisco, call 553-0123.

Malicious Mischief, Vandalism of Vehicles: Reported 11 p.m., 1100 block of Dolores Street

**Monday, March 6**

Battery: Reported 10:26 a.m., 300 block of Eureka Street; arrest, booked  
Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 10:40 a.m., 1500 block of Noe Street

**Tuesday, March 7**

Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 11 a.m., 3600 block of 24th Street  
Possession of Narcotics Paraphernalia/Warrant Arrest: Reported 4:10 p.m., 900 block of Church Street  
Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 6 p.m., Sanchez and Elizabeth streets

**Wednesday, March 8**

Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 2 p.m., 300 block of Elizabeth Street  
Battery by Juvenile Suspect: Reported 3:45 p.m., 1200 block of Noe Street; booked  
Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 7 p.m., 1400 block of Guerrero Street

**Thursday, March 9**

Aided Case, Mentally Disturbed: Reported 7:32 a.m., 24th and Church streets  
Grand Theft of Property: Reported 9:55 a.m., 200 block of Fair Oaks Street  
Grand Theft of Property: Reported 1:15 p.m., 4000 block of 24th Street; arrest, booked  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 7 p.m., 900 block of Duncan Street

**Friday, March 10**

Possession of Marijuana/Possession of Hallucinogenic/Possession of Amphetamine for Sale/Miscellaneous Investigation: Reported 10:30 a.m., 3600 block of 21st Street; arrest, booked  
Petty Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 2 p.m., 800 block of Dolores Street  
Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 2:07 p.m., 200 block of Day Street

**Saturday, March 11**

Robbery, Bodily Force: Reported 7:05 p.m., 30th and Dolores streets  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 8:15 p.m., 3700 block of 22nd Street

**Sunday, March 12**

Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 10:30 a.m., 700 block of Noe Street  
Domestic Violence, Threats Against Life: Reported 1 p.m., 4300 block of 24th Street  
Petty Theft from a Building: Reported 3:30 p.m., first block of 29th Street  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism of Vehicles: Reported 7 p.m., 1100 block of Guerrero Street  
Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 10 p.m., Sanchez and Elizabeth streets

**Monday, March 13**

Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 8:30 a.m., 1200 block of Noe Street  
Battery: Reported 2:30 p.m., 1200 block of Noe Street  
Aided Case, Mentally Disturbed: Reported 2:30 p.m., 3500 block of 21st Street

**Wednesday, March 15**

Suspicious Occurrence: Reported 9 a.m., 4000 block of 22nd Street  
Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 1 p.m., 400 block of Liberty Street  
Battery/Domestic Violence/Petty Theft of Property: Reported 1:15 p.m., first block of 30th Street

**Thursday, March 16**

Aided Case, Mentally Disturbed: Reported 7:46 a.m., Guerrero and 26th streets  
Attempted Theft from Locked Vehicle: Reported 7:30 p.m., 100 block of Sanchez Street

**Friday, March 17**

Burglary of Apartment House, Unlawful Entry: Reported 9:30 a.m., 1500 block of Dolores Street  
Burglary of Residence, Unlawful Entry: Reported 11 p.m., 4100 block of Cesar Chavez Street

**Saturday, March 18**

Burglary of Residence Under Construction, Forcible Entry: Reported 4 p.m., 4500 block of 25th Street

**Sunday, March 19**

Burglary, Residence Under Construction, Forcible Entry: Reported 4:45 p.m., 400 block of Elizabeth Street  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 7 p.m., 1300 block of Castro Street

**Monday, March 20**

Burglary of Store, Forcible Entry: Reported 4:19 a.m., 3900 block of 24th Street  
Petty Theft from a Building: Reported 6 a.m., 1700 block of Dolores Street  
Lost or Stolen License Plate: Reported noon, 3700 block of 24th Street

## Violent Robbers Arrested on Jersey Street

By Erin O'Briant

A heroic chef and a team of vigilant police officers brought two violent robbers to justice in Noe Valley on the evening of Monday, April 10, according to a report made by Ingleside Police Captain Paul Chignell. Two more suspects, both male, remain at large. The four suspects allegedly mugged four victims that evening, two of whom they violently attacked. Several of the victims were accosted while walking in Noe Valley.

Ingleside Police Officers Yvette Poindexter and Angelina Sanchez discovered the first victim when they saw a person who appeared to be in distress walking on the Highland Avenue bridge toward Mission Street at 10:18 p.m. The officers stopped to help the man, who explained that three males and one female had confronted him at the intersection of Highland and Arlington streets, choked him, and put a jacket over his head. The four attackers fled in a gold vehicle, possibly a Honda, with his money and cell phone.

Then, at 10:34 p.m., a group of three suspects attacked another victim at Church and Day streets. This victim told police that the trio grabbed him by the collar and pushed him against a wall, then took his money and fled towards Dolores Street.

About 15 minutes later, the suspects struck again. The third victim, also a man, was walking with a friend near Church and Clipper streets when three males and one female came jogging up to him. The suspects grabbed the victim's cell phone and ran away. The victim attempted to chase them, but lost sight of the foursome.

By this time, police officers had converged on the area to look for the robbers, but the gang proved elusive. Officers heard a 911 call come in from Church and Duncan streets, where a local restaurant employee, who has asked to remain anonymous, said he had been viciously attacked. The victim reported that he was surrounded by three males and one female, who demanded money from him. When the victim refused, the suspects allegedly kicked, punched, and pushed him to the ground, stole his "knife roll"—equipment the victim used for work—and left him bleeding on the street. As the suspects walked away, their fourth victim got up and ran after them while calling 911. He found the suspects at Jersey Street, where one of the suspects and the victim engaged in a second violent struggle.

Officers Chad Campos and Dan Silver, who were on the lookout for the suspects, spotted the fight. They later reported seeing one of the suspects strike the victim in the face repeatedly. When the suspect saw the officers, he attempted to flee, but they took him to the ground. As the officers did so, they noticed a female suspect fleeing on Jersey Street towards Church Street. After a short chase, they took her into custody. The fourth victim's knife roll was in her possession.

The male suspect, a Hoff Street resident, was booked on felony assault and robbery charges at Ingleside Station and remains in custody as of press time; the female suspect, a minor, was booked on similar charges at the Youth Guidance Center, but has been released pending a hearing.

Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 1 p.m., 1400 block of Castro Street  
Petty Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 5 p.m., 300 block of Eureka Street

**Wednesday, March 22**

Battery: Reported 10:20 a.m., 1200 block of Noe Street  
Burglary, Forcible Entry: Reported 6:30 p.m., 3600 block of 22nd Street

**Thursday, March 23**

Burglary of Residence, Unlawful Entry: Reported 1 p.m., 400 block of Duncan Street  
Burglary, Residence Under Construction, Unlawful Entry: Reported 5 p.m., 200 block of Jersey Street

**Friday, March 24**

Burglary of Apartment House, Forcible Entry: Reported 6 a.m., 300 block of Valley Street

**Saturday, March 25**

Trespassing/Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 8 a.m., 100 block of Vicksburg Street  
Burglary, Apartment Under Construction, Forcible Entry: Reported 4 p.m., 500 block of Valley Street  
Battery: Reported 7:30 p.m., 3800 block of 26th Street  
Malicious Mischief, Breaking Windows: Reported 7:35 p.m., 200 block of Grand View Avenue; arrest

**Sunday, March 26**

Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 4:40 p.m., 1400 block of Guerrero Street  
Burglary, Residence Under Construction, Forcible Entry: Reported 7:30 p.m., 3900 block of 25th Street  
Petty Theft with Prior, Enroute to Outside Jurisdiction: Reported 8:07 p.m., 3900 block of 24th Street; arrest, booked

**Monday, March 27**

Lost or Stolen License Plate: Reported 2 p.m., 1600 block of Noe Street

Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 6 p.m., Vicksburg and Elizabeth streets  
Grand Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 7 p.m., 300 block of 27th Street

**Tuesday, March 28**

Petty Theft of Property: Reported 3:30 p.m., 3600 block of 24th Street  
Petty Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 6:15 p.m., 23rd and Eureka streets  
Petty Theft from Locked Auto: Reported 7:30 p.m., 1500 block of Castro Street  
Malicious Mischief, Vandalism: Reported 7:30 p.m., 600 block of Alvarado Street

**Wednesday, March 29**

Burglary of Residence, Forcible Entry: Reported 7:30 a.m., 800 block of Noe Street  
Petty Theft, Shoplifting: Reported 11:15 a.m., 4000 block of 24th Street  
Aided Case, Mentally Disturbed: Reported 12:28 p.m., 1500 block of Dolores Street

**Thursday, March 30**

Lost or Stolen License Plate: Reported 6 p.m., 26th and Guerrero streets  
Malicious Mischief, Breaking Windows: Reported 11 p.m., 600 block of 29th Street

**Friday, March 31**

Lost or Stolen License Plate: Reported 12:01 a.m., 3800 block of 25th Street  
Burglary, Residence Under Construction, Forcible Entry: Reported 5 p.m., 800 block of Douglass Street

The Voice thanks Mission Police Officer Andrew MacIvrath for providing data for this month's Police Beat.





# Sue Bowie

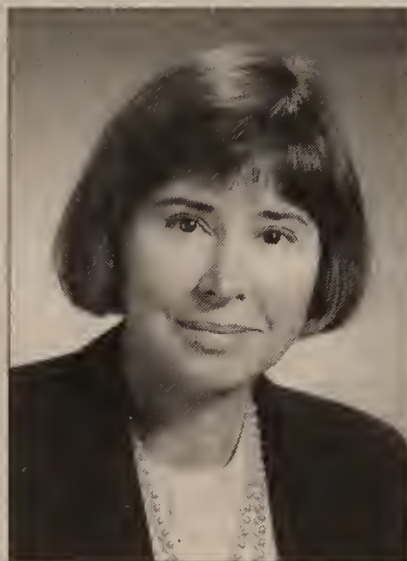
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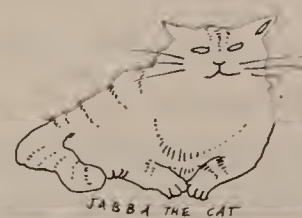
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## Guitarist Teja Gerken Builds Community Through His Music

By Olivia Boler

Noe Valley guitarist Teja Gerken wants people to take a chance on his music. With the release of his second CD last summer and a show on May 19 at the Noe Valley Ministry, his wish should be easy to fulfill.

"As long as people are willing to listen, I really don't care who my audience is if they appreciate what I try to do," Gerken says. He finds that audiences often tend to be made up of other guitarists, and while that's a compliment, he'd love to play for folks who are just there to hear good music.

What is Gerken's music like? It's kind of folksy with an urban edge; mostly instrumental pieces, using a "finger-style" technique. "I think of my music as being a blend of folk, classical, jazz, and world music played primarily on acoustic steel-string guitar," he says.

Gerken, 36, also plays classical and 12-string guitar, and over the years he has shared the stage with such virtuosos as Alex de Grassi (a former Noe Valley resident), John Renbourn, Duck Baker, and "my mentor" Peppino D'Agostino.

Solo performing isn't Gerken's only passion, however. He also organizes events featuring his fellow guitarists. Since 2001, he has hosted a monthly acoustic guitar showcase at the Bazaar Café on California Street in the Richmond District.

But it's the upcoming show at the Noe Valley Ministry that Gerken is really jazzed about. Dubbed the "San Francisco



Teja Gerken will join six other top local musicians in a "San Francisco Guitar Summit" on May 19 at the Noe Valley Ministry on Sanchez Street.

Photo by Morgan Stetler

Guitar Summit," the concert will be a culmination of his efforts to bring a mix of hot musicians together. Besides him, it will feature the well-known guitar duo Adam Levy and Will Bernard, and the San Francisco Guitar Quartet, composed of David Dueñas, Patrick Francis, Christopher Hanford, and Mark Simons. Gerken describes the event as a "guitar lover's wonderland," where you'll hear everything from traditional jazz to Brazilian samba to folk and Western swing.

Gerken, whose first name Teja is pronounced "TAY-yah," was born in Essen, Germany. He moved to the United States—specifically Mendocino—with his family when he was 16. Although he'd been playing guitar since he was a little boy, it was in high school that he began to play in earnest. While attending Petaluma's World College West, he spent six months in Michoacan, Mexico, studying Spanish and guitar.

In the mid-1990s, Gerken moved to

Noe Valley with his wife, Heather Gould. They've lived on 27th Street for over 10 years. The couple recently had their first baby, Sabine, in late March.

Gerken recorded his first CD, *On My Way*, in 1999. His latest one, *Postcards*, is an ode to San Francisco. "I think of the album as a set of postcards from the city. It could also be seen as a set of pieces that reflect my experiences of traveling and meeting other musicians," he says. Among the 12 tracks is a tune called "Noe

Valley Sunday," written by Dale Miller, former owner of the 24th Street shop Noe Valley Music. Gerken's CD also includes several original songs. Both of his albums are available on iTunes and at Streetlight Records on 24th Street.

In addition to playing, composing, and recording, Gerken works as a full-time editor at *Acoustic Guitar* magazine. He also has co-written a book on acoustic guitar, published by Hal Leonard in 2005.

Gerken says he is writing more songs, but raising Sabine is his top priority at the moment—that along with tuning up his guitar for the big summit.

"It's going to be a exciting show," he says. "Music fans of every stripe will enjoy it."

For tickets to the May 19 concert, which starts at 8:15 p.m. at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street, call 454-5238 or visit [www.noevalleymusic-series.com](http://www.noevalleymusic-series.com). You can also buy them at Streetlight Records, 3979 24th Street. Prices are \$16 in advance, \$18 at the door.

To find out more about Gerken's music, go to [www.tejagerken.com](http://www.tejagerken.com). ■



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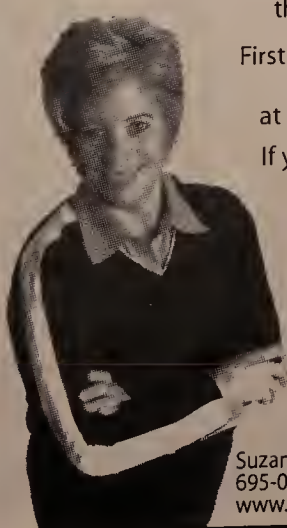


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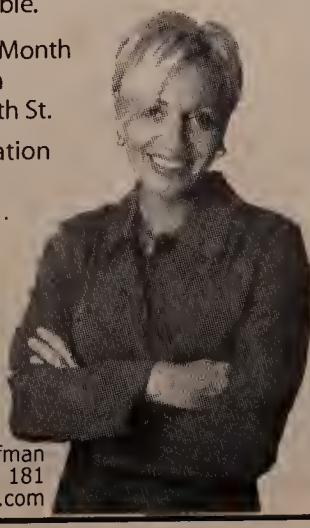
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## Artist Captures The Soul of Beach Stones

By Erin O'Briant

Sit for a moment with a page from Josie Iselin's gorgeous new book *Beach Stones*, and you'll feel your shoulders drop two inches.

"I know of nothing better for daily stress than walking along the beach collecting stones," Iselin says.

Readers of all ages can get the same feeling—without the drive to Fort Funston—from Iselin's collection of 200 images of beach stones. The book, she says, is "an artistic collaboration with nature."

Each two-page, 7-by-7-inch spread shows a grouping of beach stones against a stark black or white background. Some arrangements are whimsical—the stones might look like a paw, for example—while others simply reveal the sculptural beauty of a single stone.

The images appear to be photographs, but Iselin actually created them using her scanner. "I place the object directly on the glass of the flatbed scanner and import the resulting image into Photoshop," she explains. It's a technique she's refined over the years.

Along with each image is a caption noting where the stones were found, and on the opposite page geologist Margaret Carruthers explains what natural forces shaped the rocks. "It's really a very loving and intimate portrait of these stones," Iselin explains.

The 29th Street resident, artist, and mother of three is a longtime stone lover. "I've always collected stones," she says. "Stones are very soothing and appealing physically, and also there's something



Josie Iselin has collected stones from around the world to feature in her book *Beach Stones*. Here she displays a couple of her favorites while standing at the site of an old rock quarry on 30th Street near Billy Goat Hill.

Photo by Pamela Gerard

about the fact that they're not really worth anything, but they hold so much value—a memory of a certain beach or a physical presence. People really, really treasure their stones."

Originally, Iselin put together a small mock-up of 12 stone images. After a friend gave Iselin's sister a gift of 50 stones for her 50th birthday, Iselin expanded the mock-up into a prototype book called *Fifty Stones*. Her agent, who lives on Elizabeth Street, encouraged

her to create more images. The final product, *Beach Stones*, is being released this month by Abrams, an imprint of New York publisher Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Abrams also will publish Iselin's companion book, *Leaves and Pods*, this September. Both books are \$17.95.

Iselin is making a couple of appearances in San Francisco during the next few weeks. She'll read and sign books at Cover to Cover Booksellers—on Castro Street near 24th Street—on Friday, May

5, from 3 to 5 p.m. She encourages parents to bring their kids after school, since the book appeals to all generations.

On Wednesday, June 7, Iselin will speak at the San Francisco Center for the Book; she'll demonstrate how she uses a scanner to create images. That event takes place at 7 p.m. at 300 De Haro Street near 16th Street.

For more information about Iselin's books, visit her web site at [www.josieiselin.com](http://www.josieiselin.com). ■



Evvoia, Greece.



Devon, England.



North Haven, Maine.

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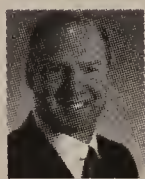
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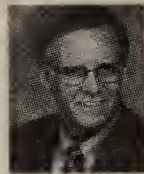


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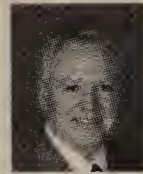


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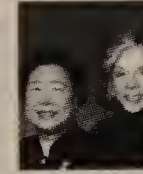
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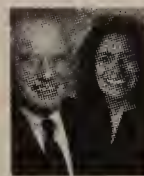
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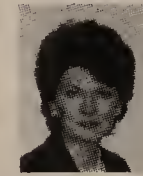
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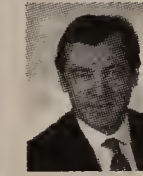
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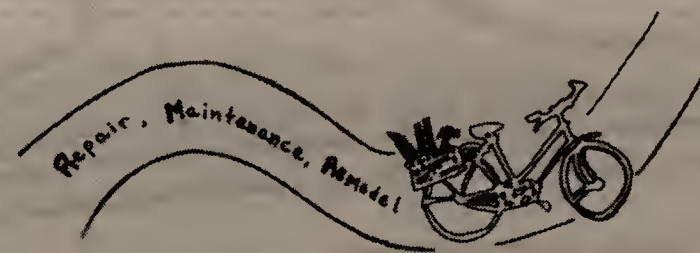
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# Let BYLINES Be BYLINES

## A Love Letter to Amy

I've never met my Noe Valley neighbor Amy, but she's one of the best neighbors I've ever had.

Amy does not password-protect her high-speed wireless Internet signal. Amy understands community. Amy shares.

I too shared my high-speed wireless signal for most of the past four years, until the RCN cable company stopped service on 24th Street, not wanting to share the cost of undergrounding the wires. At the moment, however, I haven't found a replacement, and therefore I have no wireless net signal, no high-speed signal, not even a dial-up signal.

However, Amy is sharing her unprotected wireless signal. It is available, often faintly and slowly, but fairly reliably, on the west side of my flat on the east side of Dolores Street. The signal Amy shares is a bit stronger on the southwestern edge of my flat, so I'm guessing that Amy lives somewhere on the west side of Dolores. Wherever she is, I want to thank her ever so much for sharing.

Now, if my other neighbors would stop password-protecting their "mad as hell," "Aduana," "Comcast Cable," and "Bas-net" wireless networks, we might have a little community here, relying on one another and sharing with neighbors who, for whatever reason, don't have high-speed wireless access.

Neither SBC, Comcast, nor Earthlink has been able to convince my anonymous neighbor Amy that black-hearted identity thieves will sneak in and empty her bank and credit card accounts, read all her steamiest love letters, and—aaaaghh!!—steal her identity if she is so kind as to share her signal with neighbors like me.

I will in time get another high-speed wireless signal going, quite possibly SFLan, the wireless community network now prevalent in the Mission but virtually nonexistent in Noe Valley. (For info on SFLan, "an experimental wireless community network," free of government or corporate influence, see <http://www.archive.org/web/sflan.php>.) If some of us install SFLan nodes in Noe, the signal will start to show up here, and the more nodes we as neighbors install, the stabler and faster

our community network will be. Just imagine the world without Comcast,

SBC, AT&T, or Earthlink. SFLan is a one-time charge, and neighbors can pitch in on the cost of a node. SFLan is not for sale, and it does not promote identity-theft anxiety; no one password-protects.

Has anyone out there in Noe had their identity stolen? If so, I would very much like to know whether it happened because someone hacked into their wireless network because they failed to password-protect. The most aggressive financial fraud, i.e., "identity theft," that I have ever had to fight was committed by the very credit card companies, banks, and Internet service providers who are urging us all to password-protect our precious "identities," credit cards, and bank accounts.

What sort of miscreants have abused my plastic? People who wrote them down when I ordered some sort of silliness over the phone. Most people who take telephone orders are just honestly doing their job, but let's face it, once you've given someone all the information they need to charge to your card, they've got it and they can use it. If the really bad guys, as in the spy state, want in, they're gonna get in, but if you're worried about the spy state, take heart. A spy site intercepting electronic transmissions near Stonehenge picks up enough data to fill the Library of Congress every three hours. That's a lot of data to digest. I can't worry that any-

one's going to have time to pick mine out of that pile.

And why password-protect your wireless network if you're going to flip open your laptop for instant log-on at an airport wi-fi hotspot or an Internet café? Your computer's password protection is all you have there, so why password-protect at home? Why not be a good neighbor and have some good neighbors instead? Everybody's network goes down—or leaves the neighborhood—from time to time. We all need somebody to lean on.

Thank you again, Amy, whoever you are. And neighbors, please feel free to log onto my unprotected wireless network as soon as I get another one up and running.



Ann Garrison is a writer who recently returned from New Orleans to her home on Dolores Street. You may contact her at [katrinawithoutborders@thefloodnexttime.com](mailto:katrinawithoutborders@thefloodnexttime.com).



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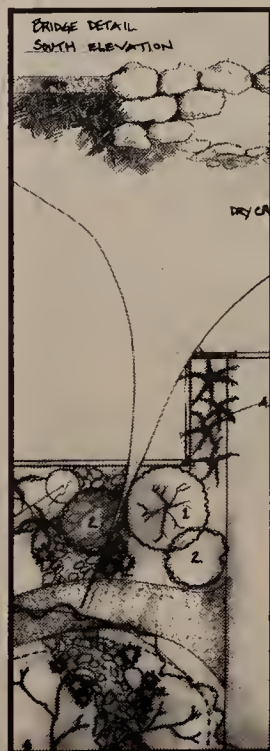
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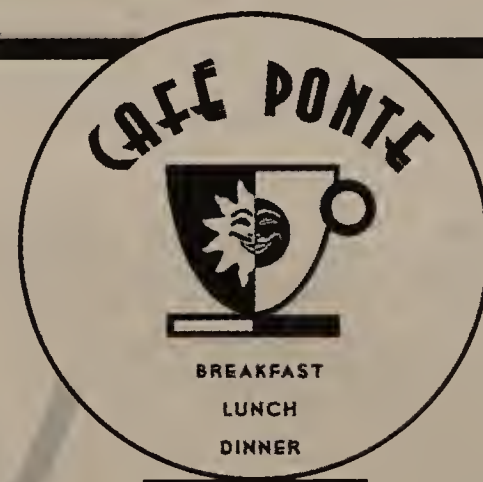
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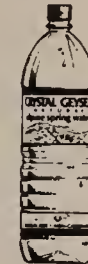
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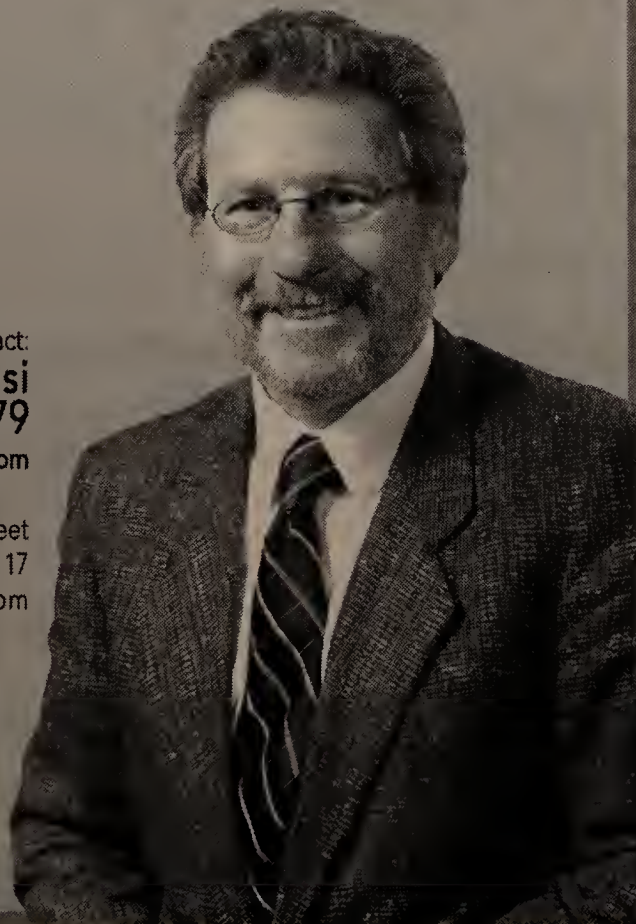
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# SHORT TAKES

By Erin O'Briant

## Clothes for a Good Cause

Combine your spring closet-cleaning with help for humankind by donating new or gently used clothes to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. In Noe Valley, St. Philip Church, at 725 Diamond Street between 24th and Elizabeth streets, has been designated a drop-off spot for St. Vincent de Paul on Saturday, May 13, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., and on Sunday, May 14, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m.

"You know the summer weather in our beautiful city, the warmer the clothing the better," says Patti Wood of St. Philip's. She adds that the Society is in particular need of men's shoes, and will also accept towels, washcloths, and sheets.

The 360 working poor, destitute, or homeless people who come to St. Vincent de Paul's centers each night for a hot meal, shower, or shelter are all offered a change of clothing, which includes new underwear and socks. The organization serves a total of about 1,000 people per day, and no one is ever turned away. For more information about the spring clothing drive, call 282-0141.

## Take a Peek at Peekabootique

The new owners of Peekabootique, the kids clothing store on Castro Street, are showcasing two new regular events this month—a Designer Series and Parents Night Out, says co-owner Mike Stanton. He also invites neighbors to "come on down and see the changes we've made."

On Thursday, May 18, 7 to 9 p.m., San Francisco jewelry designer Kathy Loewenstern, whose work has been picked up by the Smithsonian Institution, will talk about her designs and inspirations, as well as show off a trunk of new pieces, including necklaces, earrings, and bracelets. This series will continue, with new designers, on the third Thursday of each month.

Then on Thursday, May 25, parents get to let their hair down. Peekabootique will stay open late so that parents can party from 7 until 9 p.m. "We'll serve wine and

soft drinks and spin some records," Stanton says. It's a chance to relax, chat, and meet your neighbors, and kids of all ages are welcome. Co-owner Michele Furlong will also be on hand. Peekabootique is located at 1306 Castro Street at 24th Street. Call 641-6192 with questions.

## Bravo! Chamber Music

Celebrate the culmination of Noe Valley Chamber Music's 12th season with a special performance on Sunday, May 21, at 4 p.m. This season finale and fundraising event takes place at the Noe Valley Ministry, located at 1021 Sanchez Street. The performance features San Francisco Opera maestro Donald Runnicles, with Opera instrumentalists Kay Stern and Thalia Moore, performing the music of Mozart and Beethoven.

Participants can contribute to NVCM by bidding on a variety of items, including tickets to the San Francisco Symphony and Opera, a two-day getaway to Anchor Bay, and gift certificates for local restaurants such as Delfina, Firefly, and Incanto. Tickets are \$25 each. To reserve yours, call 648-5236.

## Senior Center's Spring Fling

On Lok 30th Street Senior Services will host a Spring Fling to benefit programs for seniors, on Sunday, May 7, from 1 to 4 p.m. The party, which will take place in On Lok's garden courtyard at 225 30th Street, will also honor the Friends of 30th Street, a volunteer group whose members help support the senior center. There will be a barbeque and live Latin music by Cascada de Flores.

"If you've never seen the center or the garden, you don't know what you're missing. It's a fabulous place," notes Upper Noe resident and Friends member Vicki Rosen.

The center provides a range of bilingual and bicultural services to elders in Noe Valley and the Mission District. Programs include physical activity, social opportunities, nutrition and meal assistance, and case management.

Tickets to the fundraiser are \$25. If you'd like to go, make a check out to On Lok's 30th Street Senior Services and mail it to Friends of 30th Street at 225 30th Street, San Francisco, CA 94131. Tickets will also be available at the door the day of the event. For more information, call the center at 550-2210.

## Best in Show in Dolores Park

Where better to screen the hilariously funny *Best in Show* than the site of one of San Francisco's few remaining dog parks? Canines (on leash) and their people are invited to see the film on a giant outdoor screen in Dolores Park on Saturday, May 20, at 8 p.m. Bring a picnic if you like, but organizers ask that moviegoers sit on blankets instead of chairs.

Other Dolores Park screenings this year include *Raiders of the Lost Ark* at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, July 29, and *Young Frankenstein* at 8 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 7. Every month through October, the San Francisco Neighborhood Theater Foundation hosts a free outdoor film in a San Francisco park, delighting thousands of film buffs each year. The non-profit is also dedicated to preserving neighborhood cinemas.

To explore screenings in other neighborhoods and to see photos of previous Dolores Park films, visit [www.sfnf.org](http://www.sfnf.org). The Dolores Park screening will take place off Dolores and 19th streets.

## City College Summer Signup

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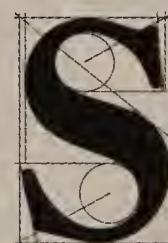


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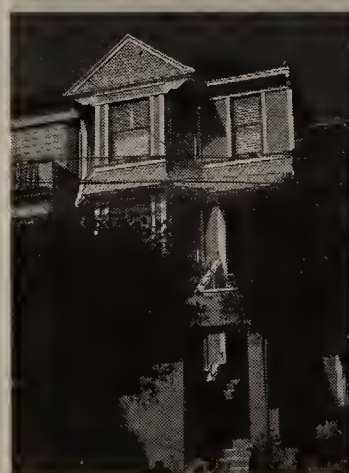
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## Lila Knows What Parents Like

Noe Valley parents, do you have your *LilaGuide*? Well, if you want to be like the rich and famous, you should pick up a copy. According to *Child* magazine, movie star (and new mom) Jennifer Garner is a *LilaGuide* user. The parent "survival guides" are *Zagat*-like books that rank kid-friendly stores, restaurants, activities, and services in 23 cities across the country. The rankings are based on surveys filled out by local parents.

Oli Mittermaier, who lives in the Upper Market area, founded *LilaGuides* a few years ago after the birth of his daughter Delilah. He says he and his wife, Elysa, were "clueless as new parents," and found themselves relying on word-of-mouth parenting advice. They published their first guide, *LilaGuide: Baby-Friendly Bay Area*, in 2002, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

Anyone can get a complimentary copy by participating in the *LilaGuide* survey at [www.lilaguide.com](http://www.lilaguide.com). Or you can buy one for \$16.95 on 24th Street. Both Ladybug Ladybug and Just for Fun carry copies.

—Olivia Boler



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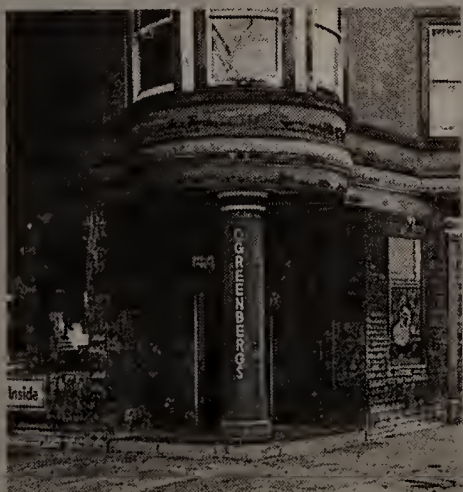


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# SHORT TAKES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Campus of City College—known by day as James Lick Middle School—is a fantastic resource. Located at 1220 Noe Street, it caters specifically to working adults in and around Noe Valley.

Summer session begins on May 30 for the early start three-week credit session. Regular six-week, non-credit classes begin June 5, and regular credit six-week sessions start June 12. The late start four-week credit session starts on June 26. Credit courses are \$26 per unit, and non-credit classes are free. Online registration for continuing students at City College has already begun; for new students online registration starts May 10. In-person registration is held June 12 to 16.

For details on City College classes, contact the school's Admissions and Records Office by phone at 239-3285 or go to [www.ccsf.edu](http://www.ccsf.edu).

## New Preschool at St. Philip

Neighborhood parents have known for a long time that more preschools were needed in Noe Valley—and now there's finally a new one at St. Philip School, located at 725 Diamond Street between Elizabeth and 24th streets. There are even a few spaces open for the summer and fall.

"[The preschool] offers a variety of full-time and part-time programs and will also run a summer camp for preschool-age children," says Paula Whitehead, president of the school's board of education. The kids get to participate in a mix of activities, including art, play, music, movement, and cooking. "Science and woodworking are also included as part of the daily curriculum," she adds.

Whitehead says St. Philip's opened its new year-round preschool in mid-February. The director, Hope Peterson, began her new position in July, and has been busy since then securing licensing, planning facilities, and recruiting teachers for the preschool. To find out more, call the school office at 824-8467.

## A Celebration of Murals

It just wouldn't be San Francisco without all of our gorgeous murals—many of which came about thanks to the efforts of artists working with the Mission District's non-profit Precita Eyes. To celebrate and honor the many muralists who beautify the Bay Area with their work, Precita Eyes is holding the 16th annual San Francisco Bay Area Mural Awareness Month Festival and Mural Awards Ceremony on Saturday, May 13, in Precita Park. The park is located close to Noe Valley on Precita Avenue between Folsom and Harrison streets.

The day's events will include a mural competition, complete with a "paint-off," a community mural "paint-in," and arts and crafts for kids. Attendees can watch a live mural performance, in which guest muralists create a mural honoring the year's award recipients. Organizers are also planning live music and muralists' booths exhibiting their art. The festival is

free. For more information, contact Joshua Stevenson at 285-2287 or visit [www.precitaeyes.org](http://www.precitaeyes.org).

## Demos Tackle Roe vs. Wade

The Noe Valley Democratic Club will sponsor a panel discussion on the hot topic of Roe vs. Wade, at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, May 17, at the Noe Valley Ministry.

Admission is free for the forum, which will focus on the prospects for overturn of Roe vs. Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that made abortion legal throughout the United States.

The discussion promises to be "very timely and provocative," says Molly Fleischman, program chairwoman of the Democratic Club.

Panelists are David Faigman, a constitutional law expert at Hastings College of Law; Amy Moy of the Public Affairs/Education Department of the Golden Gate chapter of Planned Parenthood; and Dolores Meehan of the Respect Life Program of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

Faigman will speak first, explaining the legal issues behind the abortion debate. Then Moy and Meehan will present arguments pro and con legal abortion.

The Ministry is located at 1021 Sanchez Street at 23rd Street. For more information, e-mail Fleischman at [molly@ffrsf.com](mailto:molly@ffrsf.com).

## Teens Go BATS for Summer Improv

Youth ages 11 to 17 can take advantage of short summer improv theater camps at Fort Mason Center this summer. BATS Improv, a nonprofit school and theater for improvisational performance, usually caters to adults—but in the summers they open their doors to the younger generation.

The camps for youth ages 11 to 13 run Wednesday, July 5, through Saturday, July 8, or Monday, July 10, through Friday, July 14, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. The camps for teenagers ages 14 to 17 happen Monday, July 17, through Friday, July 21, or Monday, July 24, through Friday, July 28, from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.

Each session culminates in a showcase performance. Camp prices range from \$220 to \$300. For more information, call 474-6776 or visit the BATS web site at [www.improv.org](http://www.improv.org).



## HOW TO CONTACT the Noe Valley Voice

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**May 1-31:** The Noe Valley SENIOR CENTER serves hot lunches for people over 60. 12:30 p.m. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. Reservations, 648-1030.

**May 1-31:** The Noe Valley Library's BOOKMOBILE will be open for business on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 10:30 am to 1 pm. 665 Elizabeth St., in front of St. Philip's School. 557-4343.

**May 1-31:** Chris Sequeira leads classes in TAI CHI. Mon. and Tues., 6 pm, at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St.; Wed. and Fri., 10:15 am; call 415-773-8185 or 650-756-6857 for location.

**May 2:** The San Francisco Zoo welcomes two Australian BLACK SWANS, donated by Black Swan Vineyards. Reception 1 pm. One Zoo Road. 753-7080.

**May 2:** A MEMOIR READING at the Main Library features Noe Valley author Judy Vaughn, Adair Lara, and Alan Kaufman. 6-7:30 pm. Latino/Hispanic Room, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400.

**May 2:** The Know Thyself as Soul Foundation sponsors a free Surat Shabd Yoga CLASS. 7 pm. Bernal Heights Branch Library, 500 Cortland Ave. 355-2810.

**May 2:** The Golden Gate MEN'S CHORUS premieres *Memento Mori: An AIDS Requiem*. 8 pm. Mission Dolores Basilica, 3321 16th St. 621-8203.

**May 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30:** The Kadampa Buddhist Temple offers weekly MEDITATION CLASSES. Tuesdays, 7-8:30 pm. 3324 17th St. 503-1187.

**May 2, 9, 23 & 30:** Librarians from the Noe Valley Library offer LAPSITS, for newborns through age 3, at 10:15 am; and Preschool STORY TIME, for kids 3 to 5, at 11 am. Bethany United Methodist Church, 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

**May 4:** POETS FOR PEACE—Bei Dao, Dan Powell, and Susan Kelly DeWitt—read and discuss their work. 6-7:30 pm. Main Library, Latino/Hispanic Community Meeting Room, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400.

**May 4-June 15:** ARTISTS at Creativity Explored exhibit "Sacred Places," interpreted in painting, drawing, sculpture, and handcrafted shrines. Reception May 4, 7-9 pm; Mon.-Fri., 10 am-3 pm; Sat., 1-6 pm. 3245 16th St. 863-2108.

**May 5:** Mission Cultural Center celebrates CINCO DE MAYO with flamenco, Ballet Folklórico, and hip-hop dance. 7-9 pm. 2868 Mission St. 821-1155.

**May 5-7:** An international cast of 23 will perform *Viva Concha! Rose of the Presidio*, a musical by Noe Valley songwriter CANDY FOREST. Victoria Theatre, 2961 16th St. 648-8471; [victoriatheatre.org](http://victoriatheatre.org).



Starting May 2, you can visit a pair of Australian black swans in their brand-new habitat at the San Francisco Zoo.

**May 5-17:** HOSPICE by the Bay offers volunteer training. For info, call 626-5900.

**May 6:** The 39th annual SPRING PLANT SALE at Strybing Arboretum features specimens suitable for the Bay Area's climate. 10 am-2 pm. County Fair Building, Golden Gate Park, 9th Ave. at Lincoln Way. 661-1316.

**May 6:** St. Mary's Medical Center offers a free SKIN CANCER screening. 10 am-4 pm. 450 Stanyan St. 750-4892.

**May 6:** The Miraloma Elementary School SPRING FESTIVAL features a raffle to win a Hawaiian vacation and restaurant gift certificates, an auction, games and prizes for kids, food stands, a bake sale, and live music by The Jakes and Playdate. 11 am-3 pm. 175 Omar Way, 469-4734.

**May 6:** A CINCO DE MAYO open house at the Mission Branch Library shows off Opera Piccola, La Familia Penna-Govea, and Ballet Folklórico Infantil. Noon-4 pm. 300 Bartlett St. 355-2800.

**May 6:** "American JUKEBOX" features bluegrass from both Chuck's Country Roundup and the Nightbirds, modern campfire songs from Kemo Sabe, country music from the Ca\$h Magnets, rockabilly from Sons of Emperor Norton, old-time country from Toshio, and alt-country tunes from the Robber Barons. 8 pm. The Knockout, 3223 Mission St. 550-6994.

**May 6 & 7:** Noe Valley artists Agathe Bennich, Marc Ellen Hamel, Irene Hendrick, Bohdanna Kesala, Debra King, Dennis King, Derek Nunn, Linda Saytes, and Karen Wenger will be participating in the 15th annual Spring OPEN STUDIO and sale at Hunters Point Shipyard. 10 am-6 pm. 387-5936; [www.springopen-studio.com](http://www.springopen-studio.com).

**May 6 & 7:** Choreographer Kim Epilano's Epiphany Productions presents *Lotta's Opera*, a one-block, 40-minute journey starting in 1875 at LDTA'S FOUNTAIN and ending in 1910 at One Post Plaza, with stories on commemorative plaques and remodeled buildings told through dance, theater, and song. 11:30 am and 1:30 pm. Start at corner of Market, Geary, and Kearny streets. 762-0721.

**May 6 & 7, 12 & 13:** The Marsh YOUTH THEATER performs *Doña Quixote*, based on the Miguel de Cervantes novel. May 6, 5 pm; May 7 & 13, 2 pm; and May 12, 7:30 pm. 1074 Valencia St. 838-3006.

**May 7:** The LOLLIPOP 5K RUN for girls in the third through eighth grades, is part of afterschool program Girls on the Run. 9:30 am. Golden Gate Park, Peacock Meadow. See [www.gotrsf.org](http://www.gotrsf.org).

**May 7:** Rocket DOG RESCUE introduces pups who need homes. Noon-4 pm. In front of Zephyr Real Estate, 4040 24th St. 642-4786.

**MAY 7:** Writers are each given one minute to pitch a book idea to a panel of agents, authors, and editors in "Putting Your Passion Into Print PITCHA-PALOOZA." 1-3 pm. Main Library, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400.

**May 7:** "A Spring Fling" honors friends of 30th Street SENIOR SERVICES with a barbecue and live music by Cascada de Flores. 1-4 pm. 225 30th St. 550-2210.

**May 7:** Dance San Francisco offers four-session SALSA CLASSES for beginners. 4-5:30 pm. Shotwell Studios, 3252A 19th St. 668-9936.

**May 8:** The fifth PRDGRESSIVE Reading Series, to benefit progressive Congressional candidates, features Steve Almond, Aimee Bender, Peter Rock, Hal Niedzviecki, and Pam Houston, with host Stephen Elliott. 7 pm. Makeout Room, 3225 22nd St. 647-2888.

**May 9:** New College of California's law school gives a workshop on how to present a case in SMALL CLAIMS COURT. 6 pm. 50 Fell St. 241-1300.

**May 10, 11 & 31; June 1, 3, 4, 7 & 10:** Marsh founder STEPHANIE WEISMAN's "Aphrodesia" will be performed by Deborah Gwinn, Damara Vita Ganley, and the Voci Women's Vocal Ensemble. 7:30 pm; Sun., 4 pm. The Marsh Berkeley, 2120 Allston Way. 800-838-3006.

**May 11:** St. Luke's Hospital offers an orientation for VOLUNTEERS. 3-5 pm. 3555 Cesar Chavez St. 641-6538.

**May 11:** The Friends of Noe Valley COMMUNITY MEETING discusses housing in Noe Valley, "Planning, Preservation, and Development." 7:30 pm. St. Philip's Hall, Diamond between 24th and Elizabeth. [rambooks@pacbell.net](mailto:rambooks@pacbell.net).

**May 13:** The 31st annual Fair Oaks Neighbors STREET FAIR and Flea Market offers five blocks of treasures and fun. 9 am-4 pm. Fair Oaks between 21st and 26th streets. Rain date is May 20.

**May 13:** Precita Eyes Mural Arts hosts a Mural Competition PAINT-OFF to celebrate Mural Awareness Month. 1-5 pm. Precita Park, Precita at Folsom. 285-2287.

**May 13:** PHOTOGRAPHER Germán Herrera gives a slide show and discusses his work at the Harvey Milk Photography Center. 2-4 pm. 50 Scott St. 554-9522.

**May 13:** The Bay Area Homebirth Collective hosts "Meet the MIDWIVES" at Natural Resources, on the second Saturday of every month. 4-6 pm. 816 Diamond St. 550-2611.

**May 13:** The San Francisco ART INSTITUTE's 135th anniversary gala honors artist alumni, including Noe Valley's Larry Sultan, with dinner and dancing, to benefit scholarships and financial aid. 6 pm. 800 Chestnut St. 749-4595.

**May 13:** JOHN SANTOS performs a lecture/demonstration/concert, "Rhythmic Stories," a mini-history of Afro-Latin-America told with percussion instruments. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

**May 13 & 14:** St. Philip's St. Vincent de Paul Conference sponsors a SPRING CLDTHING DRIVE. Drop off new or gently-worn, clean garments and shoes. Sat., 9 am to 5 pm; and Sun., 8 am to noon. 725 Diamond St. 282-0141.

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# CALENDAR



**May 14:** Sally Goldin discusses the preservation of memories in written and oral histories at the monthly PFLAG meeting. 2-4 pm. St. Francis Lutheran Church, 152 Church St. 921-8850.

**May 15:** Cynthia Travis, founder and director of EVERYDAY GANDHIS, discusses her work in conflict resolution at the ODD MONDAYS series at the Noe Valley Ministry. No-host dinner at Noe Valley Pizza, 5:30 pm; program, 7 pm. 1021 Sanchez St. [jlsender@webtv.net](mailto:jlsender@webtv.net).

**May 16:** A speaker from Amnesty International discusses the current state of human rights, at the GRAY PANTHERS' meeting. 1 pm. Unitarian Universalist Center, 1187 Franklin St. 552-8800.

**May 16:** Men's vocal ensemble CHANTICLEER performs at a gala cocktail reception and dinner, to support the Artistic Initiatives Fund. 6-10 pm. John Pence Gallery, 750 Post St. 252-8589, ext. 309.

**May 16:** Ingleside Police Station holds its regular POLICE-COMMUNITY meeting. 7 pm. Ingleside Station, 1 Sgt. John Young Lane. 404-4000.

**May 17:** Community Care Licensing offers a CHILDCARE LICENSING orientation, 9 to 11:30 am; and a caregiver support workshop at 12:30 pm. Children's Council, 445 Church St. 343-3333.

**May 17:** Streetside screens *At the Crossroads: Digital Stories by San Francisco Seventh-Graders*, short MOVIES written and produced by middle school students. 6 pm. Roxie Film Center, 3117 16th St. 864-5221.

**May 17:** The Noe Valley Democratic Club hosts a PANEL DISCUSSION on Roe vs. Wade, featuring representatives from Planned Parenthood and the Respect Life Program of the Archdiocese of San Francisco. 7 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 648-4010.

**May 17:** LUIS RODRIGUEZ discusses his work, including his memoir *Always Running, La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A.* 7:30 pm. Bird & Beckett, 2788 Diamond St. 586-3733.



Marc Ellen Hamel will be among the 160 artists at the Spring Open Studios held May 6 and 7 at Hunters Point Shipyard.

**May 18:** BIKE TO WORK DAY, sponsored by the S.F. Bicycle Coalition, features Energizer Stations throughout the city. A Bike Away from Work PARTY happens 6 to 9 pm at the 111 Minna Gallery. 431-BIKE; [www.sfbike.org/btwd](http://www.sfbike.org/btwd).

**May 18:** Kathy Loewenstein brings new designs to a JEWELRY TRUNK SHOW at Peekabootique. 7-9 pm. 1306 Castro St. 641-6192.

**May 18:** KIM ADDONIZIO introduces her new novel, *Little Beauties*, and Jaime Robles and John Cleary from Ecstatic Monkey Literary Promotions read from their work. 7:30 pm. Modern Times Bookstore, 888 Valencia St. 282-9246.

**May 18-28:** Goat Hall Productions presents "Fresh Voices VI," new "Opera Adventures," and the Now Festival of original MUSIC. Thick House, 1695 18th St. 401-8081; [www.goathall.org](http://www.goathall.org).

**May 19:** "Showtime" screens the work of San Francisco State University's CINEMA Department. 7 pm. McKenna Theater, 1600 Holloway Ave. 338-2467.

**May 19:** The San Francisco GUITAR SUMMIT features Noe Valley guitarist Teja Gerken, the San Francisco Guitar Quartet, and the Adam Levy and Will Bernard Duo. 8:15 pm. Noe Valley Music Series at the Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

**May 19-21:** The 1890 Bryant Group of 30 artists hosts its first OPEN STUDIOS exhibit and sale. Preview gala Fri., 7-9 pm; Sat. and Sun., 11 am-6 pm. 1890 Bryant St. 824-5756; [www.1890bryant.com](http://www.1890bryant.com).

**May 19-21:** The School of the Arts DANCE CONCERT features diverse works performed and choreographed by students and teachers. Fri. and Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 2 pm. 555 Portola Drive. 345-7575.

**May 20:** Noe Valley merchants hold a SIDEWALK SALE, with bargains all along 24th Street. 10 am-4 pm. 648-3954.

**May 20:** The annual Elizabeth Street GARAGE SALE includes goodies for sale along the 400, 500, and 600 blocks, from Sanchez to Diamond. 10 am-2 pm.

**May 20:** BUG DAY at the Randall Museum features insects up close and a screening of *In the Company of Wild Butterflies*. 10 am-2 pm; film begins at 2 pm. 199 Museum Way. 554-9600.

**May 20:** FIESTA-VAL at Fairmount School includes a silent auction, free arts and crafts activities for children, and performances by student guitarists, the Fairmount Choir, and the school's Ballet Folklorico dance troupe. Noon-dusk. 65 Chenery St. 695-5669.

**May 20:** "Call of the Wild Child: A Super-Silly Soul-Searching Safari," an original play, stars the kids of Children's After School Arts in a FUNDRAISER for CASA. 7 pm. PMUSF Presentation Theater, 2350 Turk Blvd. 643-CASA.

**May 20:** The San Francisco Neighborhood Theater Association hosts an outdoor screening of the dog-show FILM *Best in Show*. 8 pm. Dolores Park. [www.sfnth.org](http://www.sfnth.org)

**May 24:** ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE Attorney Michael J. Bean discusses current political challenges that will have an impact on the California condor, grizzly bear, and West Coast salmon; sponsored by the California Academy of Sciences. 8 pm. Jewish Community Center, 3200 California St. 321-8000.

**May 25:** Bethany United Methodist Church offers an AGAPE MEAL at noon, after the 11 am service of celebration. 1268 Sanchez St. 647-8393.

**May 21:** Noe Valley CHAMBER MUSIC ends the season with an auction and performances by Maestro Donald Runnicles and S.F. Opera instrumentalists Kay Stern and Thalia Moore. 4 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 648-5236.

**May 25:** James Lick students will participate in the POETRY AND ART Festival of the Youth of San Francisco. 5-7 pm. Main Library, 100 Larkin St. 557-4400.

**May 25:** The new owners of Peekabootique hold a "PARENTS Night Out" party. Kids welcome. 7-9 pm. 1306 Castro St. 641-6192.

**May 25:** UPPER NOE Neighbors meets at 7:30 pm at Upper Noe Recreation Center at Day and Sanchez streets. 285-0473.

**May 27:** R&B and gospel singer VERNON BUSH, of Free Measure Records, launches his debut album *Go for the Ride* at the Noe Valley Music Series. 7:30 pm. Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St. 454-5238.

**May 27 & 28:** CARNAVAL SF 2006 features a festival on Harrison Street between 16th and 23rd, from 10 am to 6 pm. Look for the James Lick float at the Grand Parade on Sunday, which starts at 9:30

am on the corner of 24th and Bryant Street, and proceeds along Mission Street to the festival area at 17th and Harrison. 920-0125; [www.carnavalssf.com](http://www.carnavalssf.com).

**May 28:** OUB MISSION celebrates Memorial Day with a musical confrontation, Warsaw Poland Brothers vs. Keyser Soze. 9 pm-2 am. Elbo Room, 647 Valencia St. 552-7788.

**May 29:** A MEMORIAL DAY ceremony at the Presidio begins with a parade at the Main Post at 10:30 am, and includes tours, music, and displays of historic vehicles. 561-5500; [www.presidio.gov](http://www.presidio.gov).

**May 30:** The POLICE-COMMUNITY meeting at Mission Police Station starts at 6 p.m. 630 Valencia St. 558-5400.

**May 30:** Glenn D. Kochi gives a postcard and photograph tour of the "Joy Zone" at the Panama Pacific International Exhibition, sponsored by the San Francisco HISTORY ASSOCIATION. 7 pm. Mission Dolores School Auditorium, 16th and Church. 750-9986.

**May 31:** NATURE IN THE CITY talks continue with "Can San Francisco Feed Itself?", hosted by the City Lights Foundation and Counterpulse. 8 pm. 1310 Mission St. 626-2060.

## JUNE BUG

The June 2006 issue of the *Voice* will blossom on or before June 2, 2006. The deadline for calendar items is **May 15**. Please note that because of space limitations, Noe Valley events take priority. Our address is *Noe Valley Voice*, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or you may send an e-mail to [calendar@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:calendar@noevalleyvoice.com).

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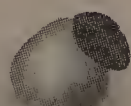
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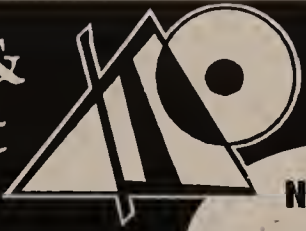
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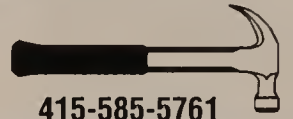
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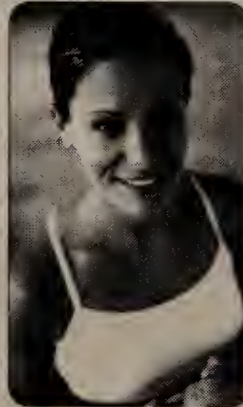
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# Noe Valley Faces

Photo by Najib Joe Hakim



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Seventy-two-year-old Ben Dominguez is a self-taught oil painter who likes to depict San Francisco scenes "the way they should be, not necessarily the way they are." His works are filled with emotion and color, and are often described as expressionistic. Although he began drawing when he was in a highchair, Dominguez took his art more seriously when "some paintings hanging in a coffeehouse set me off," back in the 1980s. At the time, he was bored with his job at PG&E and with staying out late, drinking at local bars. He thought, my landscapes are stronger and more vibrant than what's on the wall here. Why not do more painting? Since then, he's won many awards at local county

fairs and shown his work in dozens of exhibitions, some at taverns in Noe Valley. Born and bred in the neighborhood, Dominguez still lives in the house on Clipper Street that his mother bought in 1955. He attended old Polytechnic High School, where San Francisco's School of the Arts now is located. He did a stint in the Air Force, serving 2½ years in Japan during the Korean War, before returning to study at City College. He then began a 30-year career as a driver at PG&E. Dominguez calls the paintings that currently cram his house "a labor of love." Many show a devotion to homes and hills in Noe Valley. You can see samples at the online gallery Artworks4.com.



# ZIPPY

by Bill Griffith

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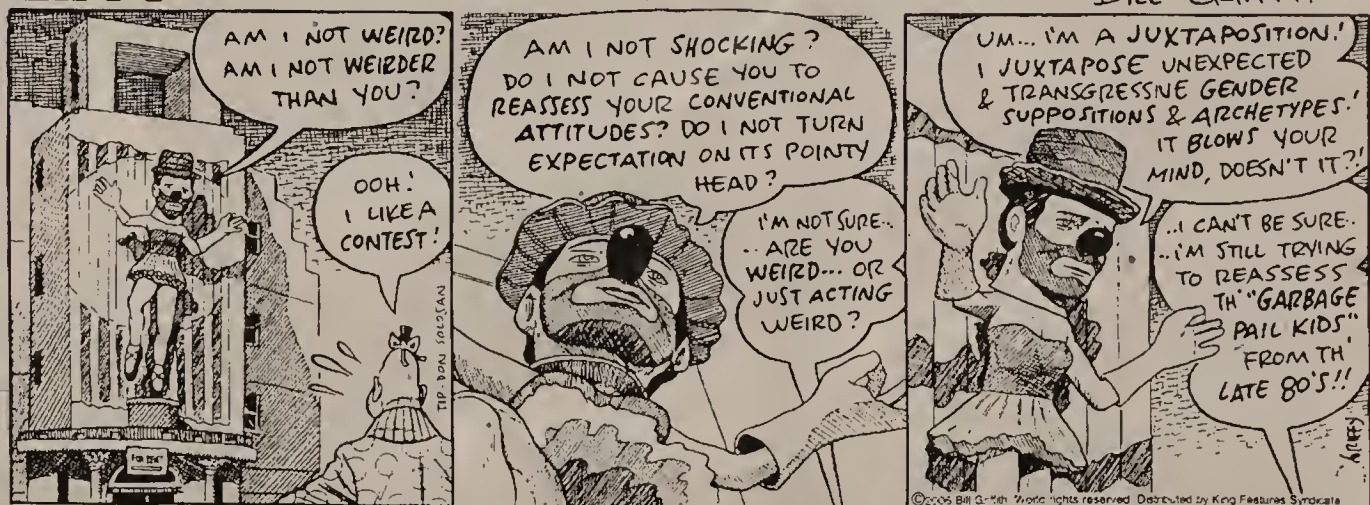
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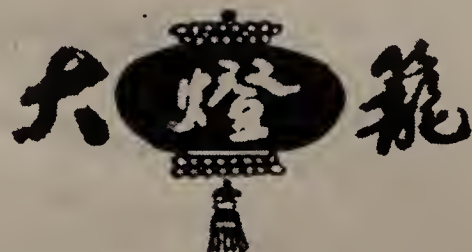
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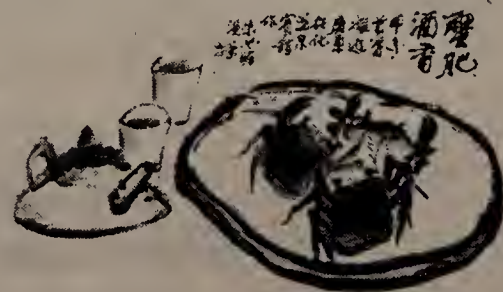
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# SCREEN AND SCREEN AGAIN!

## Sports Movies for Rain or Shine

By David O'Grady

Now that spring has sprung something other than a leak, the sunshine beckons us outdoors. For many a weekend warrior, this means a pickup game of hoops at Upper Noe Rec Center, a tennis match at Noe Courts, or a soccer match at Dolores Park. Or maybe you've scored tickets to watch the Giants at Telephone Company Park.

But if a lingering cloud delays your outdoor plans, consider renting a sports movie from a Noe Valley video store. The following picks cover the wide world of sports in all their drama, corruption, competition, and celebration.

### Baseball's First Big Scandal

Director John Sayles reminds us in his film *Eight Men Out* (1988) that the great game of baseball has been rocked by scandal before—and survived. The movie tells the story of the 1919 World Series, when eight players on the Chicago “Black” Sox threw the series to collect payoffs from well-heeled gamblers. Sayles makes the most of his strong ensemble cast, including David Strathairn (most recently Edward R. Murrow in *Good Night and Good Luck*) as a pitcher facing the end of his career, and John Cusack in a breakout performance as third-baseman George “Buck” Weaver, who knows about the conspiracy but plays to win.

The real villain in this carefully observed period piece is the tight-fisted White Sox owner Charles Comiskey, who stifles the players out of their post-season

bonus early in the film. Caught between the greed of an owner and the bookies who make a killing off their games, the players have little choice but to get a piece for themselves.

As he did in his coal-mining masterpiece *Matewan*, Sayles in *Eight Men Out* again shows the consequences of too much power in too few hands.

### Rugby's Version of *Mad Max*

*Murderball* (2005) lost the Best Documentary Oscar this year to that penguin movie, but the film's stars, the athletes competing on the U.S. wheelchair rugby team at the 2004 Paralympics, probably aren't bent out of shape about it. Like the nickname for wheelchair rugby suggests, “murderball” is a rough sport, where contestants bash one another in armor-plated wheelchairs resembling vehicles from *Mad Max* as they scuffle to get the ball across the end line of a basketball court.

The brutal physicality on display in *Murderball* is matched by the indomitable personalities of its players, who reveal their stories of paralysis as they prepare to face archrival Canada in a quest for the gold. The gift of the documentary dwells in its restraint. It refuses to turn the players' misfortunes into excuses, or their successes into movie-of-the-week clichés. These guys are angry, hard-working, foul-mouthed, horny, funny, fragile, competitive, and, above all, compelling to watch.

### Indiana, Part I

For a healthy dose of redemption in sports, look no further than *Hoosiers* (1986), the story of a middling high school basketball team in small-town Indiana in the 1950s. When a new coach, played with understated resolve by Gene Hackman, comes to town, he has to confront the second-guessing town patriarchs, undisciplined players, and a disillusioned star reluctant to re-join the team. The coach's unorthodox methods, unpopular at first, soon rehabilitate the players, the town, and even the town drunk (Dennis Hopper). But can the coach save

himself from his overly competitive drive and still take the team all the way to the finals?

Its outcome predictable, *Hoosiers* still delivers on the strength of its performances. Barbara Hershey, playing one of the school's teachers, reminds viewers of the cruel limitations of small-town life and the tension between loving your home and wanting to leave it. A rich and rewarding movie, *Hoosiers* sounds a hopeful note for second chances in life, both on and off the court.

### Indiana, Part II

Ask cyclists about their favorite cycling movie, and without fail they will name *Breaking Away* (1979). Set in Bloomington, Ind., the story follows the destinies of four young men known as “cutters”—the sons of men who worked in the town's rock quarries—in their first year after high school. One of the townies, Dave Stoller, is a cyclist who worships the Cinzano cycling team so much that he listens to Italian opera, speaks Italian phrases to his parents and friends, and even poses as an Italian to woo a local university student.

Dave gets his chance to race against the Cinzano team, but the competition ends in disaster when the Italians knock Dave off his bike, sending his life's passion into a spin. With the help of his friends, though, Dave takes up his bike again, determined to win the Little 500 bike race and to figure out his future.

Director Peter Yates captures the feeling Richard Linklater would later mine in *Dazed and Confused*, that outwardly laconic period when the tribe of youth confronts the uncertainty of adulthood. *Breaking Away* feels equally authentic in its portrayal of Dave's home life, which is full of love but sometimes lacking in understanding.

Yet the movie is best remembered for one of the most exhilarating training scenes ever filmed: Dave streaking down the highway on his razor-thin tires, drafting off a Cinzano truck going 60 miles per hour, as Mendelssohn's “Italian” Symphony keeps the pace.

### Sikhs and Soccer in West London

With the 2006 World Cup starting next month in Germany, it's a great time to watch the soccer movie *Bend It Like Beckham* (2002). The title refers to soccer star David Beckham's ability to curl a soccer ball in flight, but the story is about a young woman named Jesminder, who will have to bend the rules of her Sikh household in West London if she's going to play soccer for a local team.

It won't be easy for Jess, well acted by Parminder Nagra (Dr. Neela Rasgotra on TV's *E.R.*). Her parents want her to become a traditional Sikh woman—meet a boy, learn to cook aloo gobi, start a family—and put away childish things like soccer. With the help of her friend Jules (played by Keira Knightley) and her coach, Joe, she sneaks around her parents to follow her dream. But the complicated wedding of Jess' older sister puts soccer and family on a collision course, forcing Jess to confront her deception—and potentially choose between her family and her dream of playing professionally.

Mother-daughter dust-ups, love triangles, a lavish Sikh wedding, pulsing modern Indian dance music—and a little soccer—create an infectious, lighthearted mix that will sustain you through the silly and overlong ending. Ideal for early teens, *Bend It Like Beckham* will send all ages back out into the sunshine with a smile. ■

David O'Grady is a film enthusiast who lives on Noe Street. Send comments to [davidogrady@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:davidogrady@noevalleyvoice.com).

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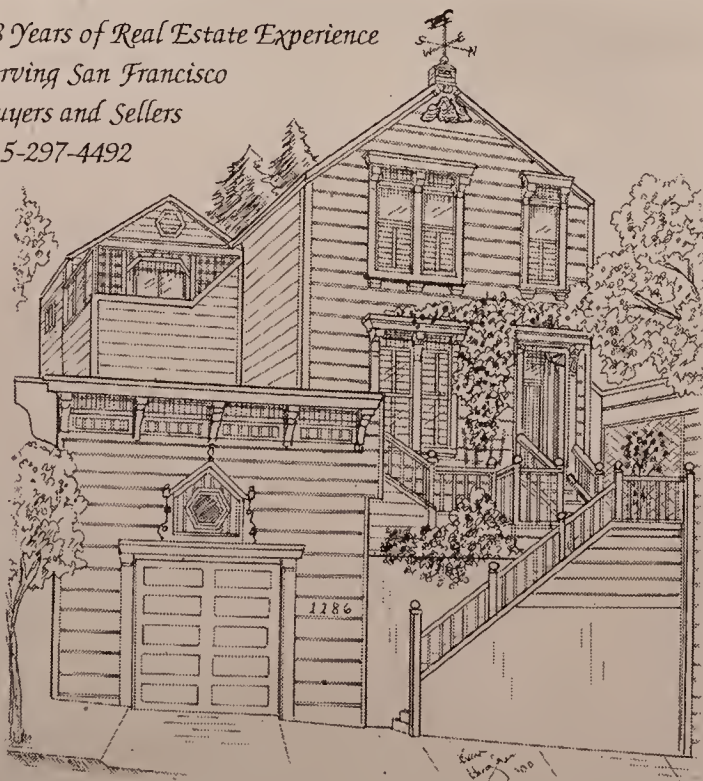
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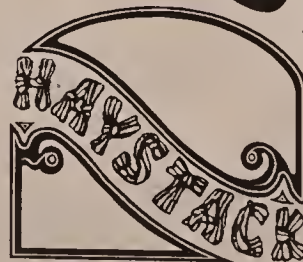
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# STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular *Voice* feature profiling new stores and businesses in Noe Valley. This month, we introduce two restaurants offering strikingly different cuisines. Kookez Café specializes in homey American food, while La Ciccía brings authentic Sardinian flavor to the neighborhood.

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Genuine Americana is hard to find in an international city such as San Francisco—but 24th Street's newest restaurant, Kookez Café, aims to provide a truly American experience. The menu features specialties from all over the United States, a West Coast-only wine list, and classic chocolate chip cookies made by the owner herself.

Diners can choose from an ever-evolving dinner menu that may include spicy ribs, barbecued shrimp, pork tenderloin, chicken potpie, and herb-crusted salmon. The brunch menu features eggs benedict, homemade granola, and a "to die for" coffee cake. Prices for main courses range from \$8.50 for a burger and garlic fries to \$26.50 for a New York steak platter, but most are \$11 to \$18. A vegetable puff pastry with a house salad is \$14.95.

Kookez (pronounced "cookies") opened in March in the spot vacated by Miss Millie's, on 24th near Castro. The café has "a warm, cozy feeling," says owner Lynn Presley, who lives right around the corner at 25th and Diamond streets. Presley's son Deano Lovecchio manages the restaurant, and the chief chef, Amir—who goes by only one name—handles dinners and weekend brunch with the help of sous chef Eileen de Loez.

Meanwhile, Presley does all the baking, including about five desserts each week, such as Grandma Lori's Chocolate Brownie Cake or Pennsylvania Dutch Pear Baby (a lemon-poached pear soufflé served with vanilla ice cream). Customers won't always know in advance what desserts are being served, but Presley is flexible. "If regular customers have something they're looking forward to and



Owner Lynn Presley, Deano Lovecchio (left), and Bob Peak (right) are all part of the family operation dishing up American food at Kookez Café on 24th Street.

they're coming in, if they let me know 24 hours in advance, I'll make it for them." She's also happy to sell her baked goods whole, for dessert fans who want to take a pie or cake (or cookies) home.

Presley's baked goods inspired the restaurant in the first place. "I just love to bake. I make these chocolate chip cookies, and I've tweaked the recipe over the years," she explains. Friends told her she should turn her cookies into a business, but she was busy working as the principal of Woodland School in Portola Valley, near Palo Alto. A year and a half ago, she left that position and began considering a new career. "At first I thought of opening a coffee shop to sell the cookies," she says, but she quickly realized that cookies alone would not pay the rent. She began to hatch the idea of opening a full restaurant, the space on 24th Street became available, and Kookez was born.

Kookez Café is open Wednesday through Saturday from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., Sundays from 5 to 9 p.m., and for weekend brunch on Saturdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Sundays are Kookez Kidz nights, offering a special kids menu that includes a main dish, a small drink, and the choice of a cookie or cupcake, for \$7.95. You can view all the menus and make dinner reservations online at [www.kookez.com](http://www.kookez.com). Brunch on the weekends is first-come, first-served.

—Erin O'Briant



Massimiliano Conti and Lorella Degan are eager to show off their Sardinian-Italian fare at La Ciccía, located where Church Street meets 30th Street. Photo by Pamela Gerord

## La Ciccía

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[www.laciccia.com](http://www.laciccia.com)

"We are the first Sardinian restaurant west of Dallas," Massimiliano Conti says proudly, as he stands in front of La Ciccía, the small, 40-seat bistro he opened on April 10 with his wife, Lorella Degan.

What is Sardinian cuisine? It's many things, says Conti, because Sardinia, a Mediterranean island located 120 miles west of the Italian peninsula, was colonized by a dozen different cultures—from the ancient Phoenicians to the Romans, Arabs, Moors, Spanish, and French—before it became part of Italy in 1861. Mince, parsley, basil, and rosemary are its trademark spices. So is saffron, which grows abundantly just minutes from Cagliari, the Sardinian town where Conti grew up. Degan hails from the Veneto region in northeastern Italy.

"We use a lot of produce from the land and a lot of meats, including wild game, such as wild boar, hare, and wild rabbit. We also use a lot of lamb, and on the coasts, of course, there's seafood," Conti says.

"La ciccía" stands for "belly" or "prosperity" in the Sardinian language, and the restaurant is the culmination of a long search for the Conti family. The couple live in North Beach and had tried "for years to find a spot for our restaurant. But they were either too big or too small, or too expensive," Degan explains.

When they discovered the storefront formerly occupied by Verona Restaurant and Pizzeria at 30th and Church streets, they jumped at the chance to put down roots in Noe Valley.

La Ciccía's menu, written in Italian and Sardinian, with English translations, offers five appetisers, four first courses (soups and pastas), four pizzas, four main courses, and four desserts. You can try an antipasto of assorted salami and Sardinian crostini, \$8; a shrimp and garbanzo bean soup, \$7; and baked sea bass with potatoes, olives, and bay leaves, for \$17. Other savory entrées include the Sardinian lamb stew with saffron, potatoes, and peas; and the *Bistecchedda de Boi cun Binu Nieddu* (seared beef hanger steak in red wine sauce); both \$17.

Individual, thin-crust pizzas, including a pizza of the day, are \$10 to \$12. The desserts, such as the *Macedonia di Frutta al Limoncello* (fruit salad with lemon liqueur), are all \$6.

Conti is executive chef, and Degan runs the front of the house. The pasta, breads, and pizza dough are all made on the premises, and fish arrives every other day. One item rotates off the menu every three weeks, so there is almost always something new to try.

But the true specialty at La Ciccía is its wine. Conti's family has vineyards in Sardinia, and for four years he served as sommelier at the prestigious Acquerello on Sacramento Street. For his own restaurant he has tried to shape the 70-bottle wine list to present a variety of lesser-known labels, many from his private cellar. At an open house in April, customers' eyes were twinkling after trying the red *Nuragus di Cagliari "Selegas" Argiolas* and the white *Vermentino di Sardegna "Costamolino" Argiolas*. Both wines are \$7 per glass, or \$27 per bottle.

"Please," says Degan, "tell people to come in, even if it's just to have a glass of wine." She points to the freshly remodeled bar area, where there is room for four or five people to sit down and enjoy the Wine Flight of the Week: a tasting menu of two, three, or four different wines (\$6, \$9, or \$12). You can sip all you like: The J-Church is right outside the door to carry you home.

La Ciccía is open seven nights a week for dinner only, from 5:30 to 10 p.m.

—Doug Konecky



## IN OTHER NEW BUSINESS

In addition to restaurants sprouting up on 24th and Church streets (for extra tidbits, see *Rumors*, page 55), there have been several other changes in the village of Noe Valley this past month. *Voice* writer Laura McHale Holland tells us about two—one involving a hair and skin care salon and the other a center for "Reiki" energy.

### We're Envious of NVS

Nicole Tomoda-Adams and Carla Martino are walking tall these days, enjoying the successful transition from employees at the now defunct Bamboo Salon to owners of NVS Hair and Skin. (NVS, an aural play on the word "envious," stands for Noe Valley Salon.)

NVS opened its doors in February and occupies the same 810 Diamond Street

storefront that once housed Bamboo, but it is a completely new entity. "We have a different look, different vibe, different name," Tomoda-Adams says. The new look is sleek with black tile floors, custom-made stations with slate accents, and detailed metalwork.

Tomoda-Adams and Martino worked together for about a year and a half before they joined forces. Tomoda-Adams focuses on hairstyling and Martino on skin care and Swedish massage.

"It's very exciting because the business is for you and your family, and the stability is really nice," Tomoda-Adams says. "You're going to have this job [hairstyling] as long as you want it."

Martino agrees. "There's nothing more satisfying than going home and knowing that you worked hard and you did it for yourself," she says.

So far, business has been very good. "Many of our clients will get a facial and massage and then get a cut and style," Tomoda-Adams notes. "It's very laid-back, and when clients leave, they feel pretty complete."

Martino loves the diversity of their clientele. "Noe Valley is a big mommie neighborhood, and sometimes we even get moms and grandmothers coming in together for packages," she notes. "Sometimes it's a group of friends or a wedding party."

There are also plenty of professionals seeking up-to-the-minute styles. "I used to work downtown, and leaving there is one of the best things I've ever done," Tomoda-Adams reflects. "People want high-end services, but they don't want to go downtown for them anymore. They want to stay in the neighborhood, and that way everybody's nice and relaxed."

The duo is planning a grand opening party on June 3, starting at 3 p.m. They'll have cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. All ages are welcome. Call 824-2070 for more details.



### Reiki Energy Unfolds in Purple Iris

For today only, do not anger, do not worry, be humble, be honest in your work, and be compassionate to yourself and others: Those nuggets of wisdom are the five basic precepts of Reiki, a system of teachings and healing founded in Japan at the end of the 19th century by samurai and Buddhist lay priest Mikao Usui.

"The word 'Reiki' is made up of two Japanese words, *rei*, which means spiritual or sacred, and *ki*, which means universal energy or life force," says Bette Briggs, who in Janu-

ary launched the Reiki Clinic of San Francisco at 1404 Church Street.

Briggs, who rents space for her clinic in Purple Iris Healing Center, says she was drawn to Reiki about 13 years ago when she sought help recovering from surgery. Reiki worked so well for her that in time she became a practitioner herself. "There is a whole system imparted from teacher to student, and it's about strengthening the connection with one's own energy system, or true self," Briggs says. "If someone wants to have a private session, it's very simple: They lie fully clothed on a comfortable massage table. They'll be covered with blankets; there'll be a candle, and soft music. And the Reiki energy is transferred by laying on of hands."

Hands are placed on or near and sometimes above the body, she explains, and typically follow the chakra

system—points on the body that are considered to be loci of life energy in Hindu and certain other Asian cultures.

"The Reiki energy has an intelligence all its own," Briggs says. "It goes where it needs to go. It's the life force energy, and it's the client who is creating the energy they need in order to heal."

She says new clients often experience a deep sense of relaxation and pleasant feeling. "They may have insights into situations, or they may feel that they want to make positive changes in their lives, and the beautiful thing is that [Reiki] operates on all levels simultaneously, so it can affect the physical as well as the emotional, mental, and spiritual."

To find out more, call Briggs at 407-4233 or visit [www.reikiclinic.com](http://www.reikiclinic.com).

—Laura McHale Holland



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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE web site at [www.noevalleyvoice.com](http://www.noevalleyvoice.com) offers the current news stories, features, and Class Ads. The site also has *Voice* archives from 1996 to the present. Copies of the newsprint edition dating back to May 1977 are stored in the History Room of the Main Branch of the San Francisco Public Library.

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# FLORENCE'S FAMILY ALBUM

Illustrated Reminiscences  
by Florence Holub

## Show and Tell

*In this essay, reprinted from the April 1995 issue, Florence Holub describes the joys and pitfalls of being a collector.*

Last month, my man Leo and I visited the Transamerica Pyramid to view an exhibition called "The Collector's Eye," which contained highlights from three private collections.

One of the collectors, George McWilliams, is a graphic designer who was once a prize student of Leo's at the California School of Fine Arts (now the San Francisco Art Institute). With impeccable taste, George has collected hundreds of rare and beautiful cultural artifacts on his world travels over the past 30 years. The collection includes textiles from South America and Southeast Asia, pottery from Mexico, and burial objects from Egypt and China.

The second featured collector, Kit Hinrichs, is also a graphic designer. He started collecting American flags as a child after developing a fascination for the hand-sewn woolen flag made in 1865 by his great-great aunt in Ohio. Now he has amassed more than a thousand Old Glory flags and flag icons in his "Stars and Stripes" collection, including quilts, postcards, campaign buttons, food labels, and cigar bands.

The third collector, Dr. Leo Keoshian, is one of the nation's foremost hand surgeons. He has collected photographs, sculptures, and objects that celebrate the human hand as both a wondrous instrument and a work of art.

The impulse to collect seems to be instinctive, sometimes compulsive. It can also be accidental, as was the case with Leo's mother, who didn't discover her interest in doll collecting until she was middle-aged, when a friend gave her two very old suede-covered headless dolls.

Grandma was clever, so she immediately began researching the subject. In no time, she found bisque reproductions of the original heads. She was so excited that she showed them to everyone, including Helen Helfrich (née Helen Hughes), our next-door neighbor on 21st Street.

Helen, a spontaneous and generous soul, ran upstairs and returned with an old but beautifully preserved doll. She then told Grandma the doll's history, which began in 1906 at old St. Mary's Cathedral on Van Ness Avenue.

The church held a fundraising event attended by movie star "Bronco Billy" Anderson, who had played the lead in *The Great Train Robbery* (1903). At the fundraiser, Anderson used his charisma to sell a number of expensive dolls with china heads.

Helen's mother bought one for her little girl, but once home she did not allow Helen to play with it because the

doll's head was so fragile. She placed it in a high cabinet, where it remained virtually untouched for many years.

As a result, Helen never formed a strong attachment to it, she said. At this point in the conversation, Helen casually handed the doll over our deck railing to Grandma, so she could add it to her small collection.

The doll was dressed in a light ecru frock with fine lace insets over a petticoat and bloomers trimmed with delicate lace. She wore small white shoes with tiny buckles. On her head was an off-white velvet cloche trimmed with a brown velvet rose-studded band. Her rosy-cheeked, hand-painted face had eyes that opened and closed with long eyelashes. Her arms and legs were moveable, too!

"Miss Helen" remained Gram's favorite of all the 200 dolls that she eventually acquired. One summer, she won a blue ribbon in the antique doll show at the Nevada County Fair in Grass Valley.

Leo's father was a bit of a collector, too. A great admirer of Abraham Lincoln, he amassed many items related to our 16th president and to the Civil War.

I think Leo inherited his parents' collector tendencies. As long as I have known him, he has been in the habit of bringing home things of interest to him—and he has broad interests! He even has a sign posted on his bulletin board that says, "There's something cozy about junk." Ah well, I never could resist a "Sale" sign myself!

Our three children, all boys raised in the '50s, developed similar qualities. One evening when we visited the home of Bob Cook, a co-worker of Leo's, our two oldest boys were enchanted with a fabricated Pacific island that Bob's father had made for him when he was young. Inside a large flat metal tray, Mr. Cook had constructed a tropical island from plaster of Paris, metal, and paint. He built a cone to represent a volcano, then installed wiring and a red light bulb that looked like molten lava when it was plugged in. A sandy beach fringed with palm trees—with fronds made from sheet metal—surrounded the volcano.

At 6 and 8, our boys were just the right age to appreciate the island, so Bob gave it to them. That night, the happy lads brought it back to our house on Kingston Avenue, and placed it on the toy box next to the bunk beds in their small room. Soon it became a magnet for

all the kids on the block.

Our Pacific island had some bad points, though. Whenever I bent over to make the lower bunk in that tiny room, the pointed metal fronds stabbed me in my rear quarters. As soon as the boys' interest in the island waned, it mysteriously disappeared.

The Purple Heart Thrift Store was then located nearby on Mission Street at 30th, where the Safeway now stands. We passed the thrift store often and couldn't resist the bargains there.

I once acquired a perfectly usable (only slightly dented) breadbox for less than a dollar, and one time our 9-year-old son Michael robbed his piggy bank in order to buy and lug home a double-hulled Hawaiian outrigger canoe. We still have it in our attic, along with another find—a five-foot model of a sloop, complete with mast and sails.

At that time, Leo was busy filling the basement with printing and photography gear. When he brought home a paper-cutter bigger than a washing machine, however, I knew I had to lay down the law. Our four-room cottage was bulging.

Comedian Tony Randall used to say, "Is it bigger than a breadbox?" on the popular quiz show *What's My Line?* After the canoe and paper-cutter incidents, "Nothing bigger than a breadbox!" became my motto.

The rule was respected for a long time, that is until we moved into our much roomier house on 21st Street. Then Leo brought home something that opened the floodgates: a huge wooden breadbox large enough to accommodate yard-long loaves of French bread!

Despite our acquisitiveness, though, I don't think you could consider our family members to be true collectors. We have some fine new and used books, as well as junk shop treasures, but we more closely resemble pack rats than antique appraisers. Each object we save serves as a reminder of some interesting event in our lives.

I picked up the fossilized rocks with tiny shells, objects now displayed on our deck, at Año Nuevo Beach long before it became unlawful to do so. Our son Jan brought home the iridescent shells from his successful diving expeditions on the Mendocino Coast. Under the deck lies the sun-bleached lower jawbone of a moose, which Leo fell in love with on our trip to the Grand Tetons in Wyoming.

In the same tradition, our youngest son, Eric, and his friend Walter trans-



"Miss Helen" survived the 1906 Earthquake and Fire and two or three extended childhoods on 21st Street. Photo by Leo Holub

ported a heavy metal missile casing all the way home from an army-navy surplus store on Market Street (by way of the J-line) when they were going through their GI Joe period 20 years ago. We still have it up in the attic, too.

Our house is overflowing with objects, paintings, and photographs, each with some personal meaning. One item that now occupies a place of honor in our living room—a glass cabinet made especially for her—is Miss Helen. Leo's father gave the doll to us after Gram died 10 years ago.

Miss Helen's eyes are wide open, and she's gazing in the direction of the house next door, where she lived so long ago. ■

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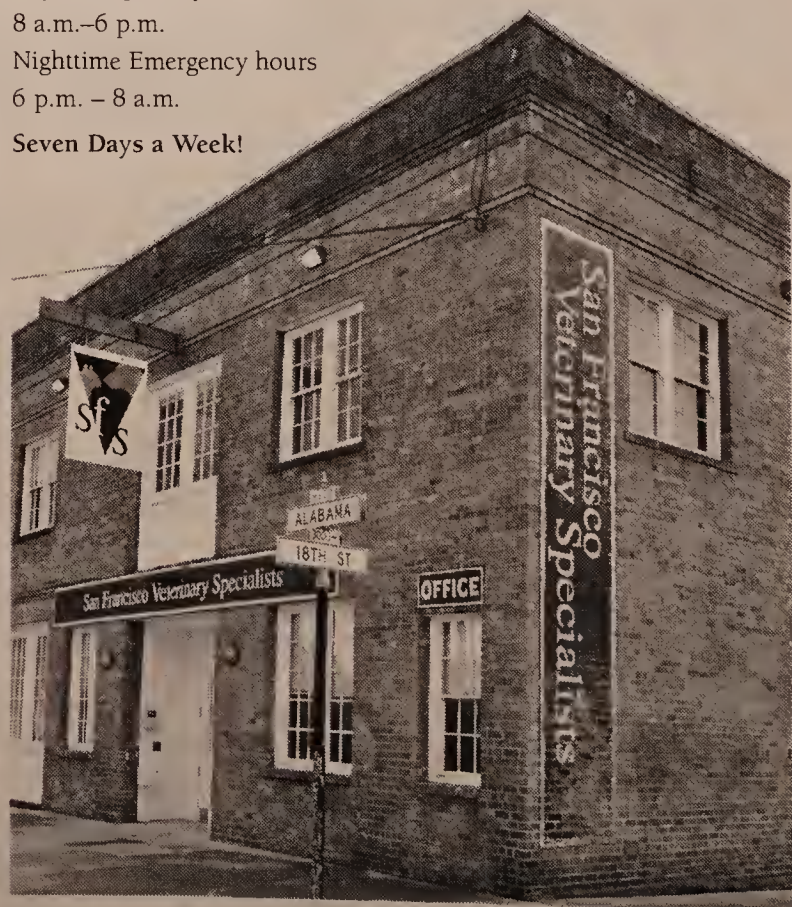
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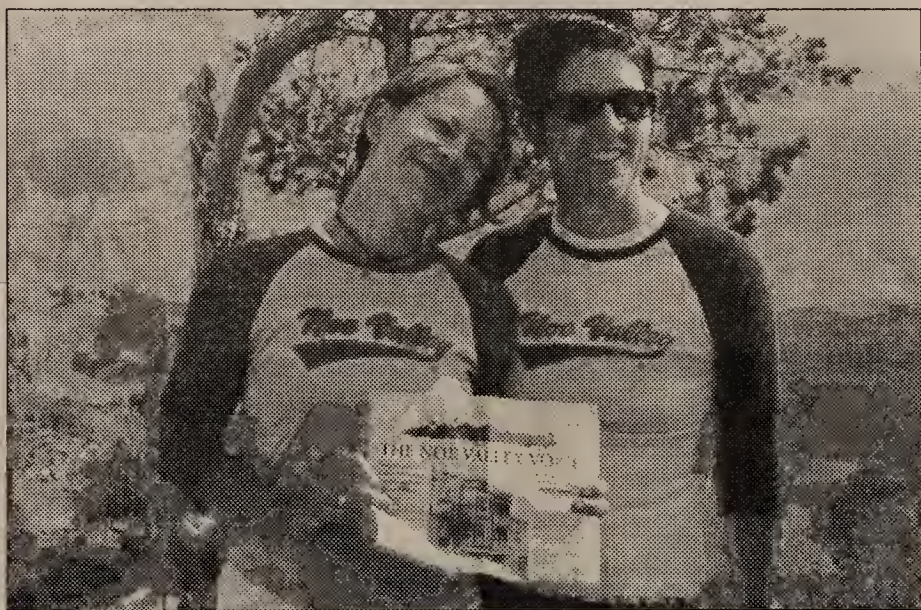


## May's the Right Time For Reading

One thing is sure, *Voice* readers will carry their favorite periodical at any time and take it anywhere in the world. You're welcome to join them in sharing their adventures by mailing your own photos and caption information to: *Noe Valley Voice*, Attn: Readers, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Please include a phone number in case we need to interpret your handwriting. You can also attach your digital photo (one only, please) to an e-mail and send it to [editor@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:editor@noevalleyvoice.com). Thanks for bringing us along for the ride.



Donald Abrams (left) and Clint Werner paused for a news break while traveling in Turkey's Cappadocia region. The pair were at the perfect spot to witness the "awesome", total eclipse of the sun on March 29.



Laurie Gibbons and Jesse Lindsey-Gibbons took their love of all things Noe Valley to the Grand Canyon in May 2005. Laurie's dad and Jesse's mom accompanied them as they packed in three days of food and water and a copy of the *Voice* to share.



Noe Valley residents Lori Stasukelis, Debbie Dells, Regina Faustine, and Nancy Scott-Rogers share the news from back home with Maasai senior elder Robert Oloimooja in Kenya's Maasai Mara.



Al MacDonald (left) and Danny Lozano brought a copy of the *Voice* all the way from Church Street to Australia in March. Here they pose in front of the Sydney Opera House with the Harbor Bridge in the background.



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**Moms and Girls Holding Court.** After a rainy March and April, these playground pals found it great to get outdoors at Noe Courts again. Sisters Anna and Katherine Jonckheer (4 and 7 years old) flank 4-year-old Stella McGinn on the slide. Stella's mom, Tammy Childers, is at left, while Anna and Katherine's mom, Elizabeth Jonckheer, holds their 2-month-old baby sister, Natalie. Even though there's occasional sun, the weather is still a bit cool.

Photo by Pamela Gerard



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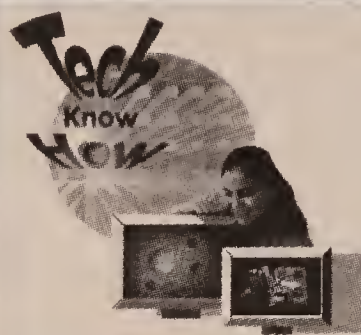
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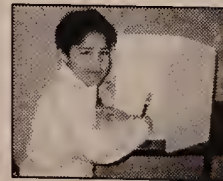
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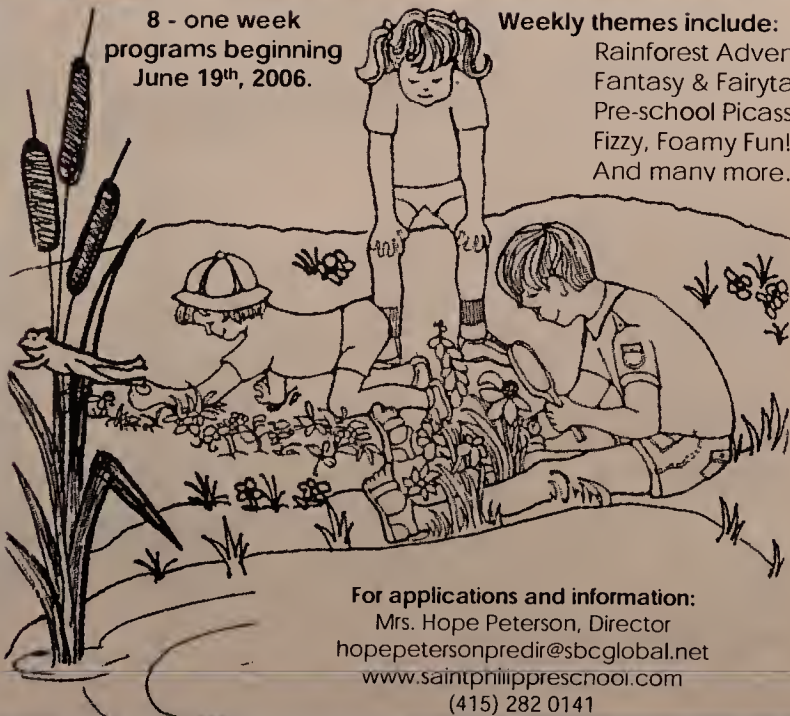
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# Noe Valley Voice

*Especially for Kids and Their Families*

Written and Illustrated by Laura McCloskey

## Before the Cars and Buses Came to Noe Valley

Two hundred years ago, Noe Valley barely had roads, and it definitely did not have trains, cable cars, or automobiles. The steep hills surrounding our valley made it hard to get around and limited how people traveled from one place to the next. As they still do now, most kids in the 1800s walked to school or down to the corner store. It was probably rare for kids to ride horses or drive their parents' horse and buggy. Because of the high cost of keeping a horse, not all families had them. A few kids may have had bicycles.

Starting in the 1850s, public transportation—a way to move from one place to another with a lot of people—came in the form of rail cars, cable cars, trains, electric streetcars, and buses. Eventually, people in Noe Valley bought automobiles for their personal use. Now, Noe Valley is so crowded with cars and trucks, it is often difficult to find a place to park on the street.

A number of forms of public transportation in Noe Valley have come and gone. In 1887, the Market Street Cable Railway Company installed a rail line on Castro Street between 18th and 26th streets. In those days, the railway company painted the cars on each line a specific color. The Castro cars were painted white—actually, ivory with dark red trim. Cars on Haight Street were red, and on Valencia Street they were blue.

In 1887, the line to Noe Valley had a rail car powered by electricity, but in 1907 the rail cars on Castro were replaced with cable cars, pulled along the tracks by thick wire ropes running underground. Older residents of Noe Valley enjoy talking about the Castro Street cable car, which they called the “Dinky” because it was so small.

By 1939, people thought the cable cars had become old-fashioned, so they asked to have buses instead. In 1941, the rails were replaced with a Number 24 electric bus line.

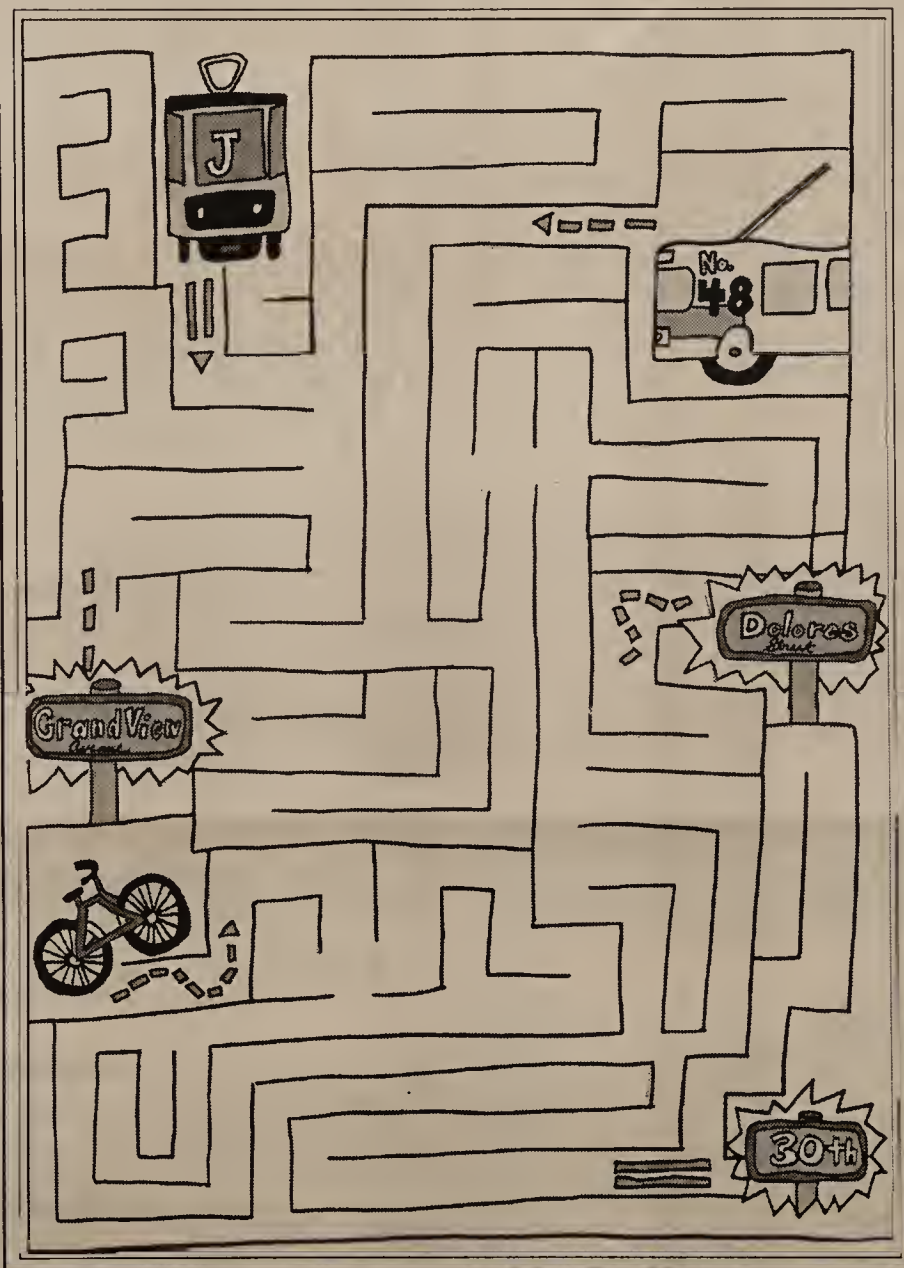


Here is an old cable car going up Castro Street near 23rd Street. Nicknamed the “Dinky,” the cable car ran up and down the Castro hill from 1907 to 1941.

Fifty years earlier, another type of public transportation had come to Noe Valley. In 1892, the San Francisco and San Mateo Electric Railway began running a train from the Ferry Building in downtown San Francisco through the Mission and along the southeastern edges of Noe Valley. Passing near 30th and Chenery streets, the train went through Glen Park and all the way to San Mateo County's Holy Cross Cemetery. The train eventually became

## Find Your Way Around Noe

**Directions:** The vehicles below need your help finding their way to their destination. Use a **RED** crayon to draw the tracks for the **J-line streetcar** traveling to 30th Street. Use a **BLUE** crayon to draw the route for the **No. 48 bus**, traveling to Grand View Avenue. Use a **GREEN** crayon to draw the route for the **bicycle** riding to Dolores Street.



part of the San Francisco Municipal Railway, or Muni, which we use to ride around the city today.

Noe Valley also had two electric streetcar lines. The Number 11, also called the 11-Hoffman, ran down 24th Street from Hoffman Avenue to Dolores Street. Next it turned left on Dolores, and then right on 22nd to Mission Street, and from there to downtown. On its return, the 11 came up the hill on 22nd and Chattanooga streets.

The Number 9 trolley went through Noe Valley on 29th Street and made its way to downtown San Francisco via Valencia and Market streets.

What did it cost to take public transportation a hundred years ago? Five cents. You could even take a line all the way out to Ocean Beach for five cents.

## From Here to There in Noe Valley

There are a number of ways kids get around Noe Valley in 2006. Many kids walk around the neighborhood. They walk to school and to their friends' homes for play dates. Kids also walk along 24th Street with their parents and friends.

Other kids bike, scoot, skate, and roll their way around Noe Valley. Most kids wear helmets and kneepads to protect them from falls.

Many kids ride the buses in Noe Valley. There are two “crosstown” bus lines that pass through the neighborhood. The **24-Divisadero** bus runs south on Castro and Noe streets to 30th Street (and beyond). The block of Noe Street between 26th and Cesar Chavez streets is one of the steepest the electrically-powered 24 bus has to climb.

The **48-Quintara/24th** bus runs from Grand View Avenue and through Noe Valley along 24th Street. The Number **35-Eureka**, a “community service” line that loops around Eureka Valley, Noe Valley, and Diamond Heights, runs along Eureka and Diamond streets.

There is one Muni Metro line, the **J-Church** line, which goes through Noe Valley along Church Street. When the J cars come from downtown, they have to go up a steep hill in Dolores Park. In fact, the J-line has the steepest grade of any Muni Metro line in the city.

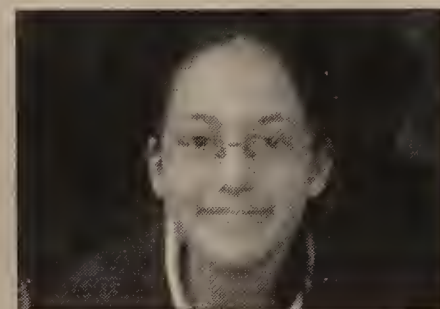
Nowadays, children 4 and under ride the Muni bus and rail lines for free, while kids 5 to 17 pay 50 cents. The adult fare is \$1.50.

## How Do These Kids Get Around in Noe Valley?

Four eighth-graders from the James Lick School Newspaper Club let us know how they get from here to there in Noe Valley.



**Delilah Sabater** says, “I get around Noe Valley by car. My grandfather drives me to school and back home.”



**Alexia Vallin** says, “I get around Noe Valley lots of different ways. When I go to school, my dad usually drives me, but when I’m going somewhere that’s close, I usually just walk there.”



**Sara Baker-Flynn** says, “I get around Noe Valley by walking. If I’m going home from school and if it’s dark out, I might take the bus.”



**Kimberly Kraus** says, “My way to school is about a half-hour commute. I take the N-Judah from my house, walk up a steep hill, and take the 24 bus.”

For bus schedules, go to [www.sfmuni.com](http://www.sfmuni.com) or call 415-673-MUNI

SPECIAL THANKS to Bill Yenne and his book *San Francisco's Noe Valley*; Noe Valley Archivist Paul Kantus; Lina, Marna Blanchard, and the Newspaper Club at James Lick Middle School; the Virtual Museum of the City of San Francisco, [www.sfmuseum.org](http://www.sfmuseum.org); and San Francisco's Cable Car Museum, [www.cablecarmuseum.org](http://www.cablecarmuseum.org).



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## Looking Down by Leo



We're in the Words Business here at the Noe Valley Voice, and we know the challenge of getting the facts and spelling right. That's why we have those pesky editors phoning, turning dictionary pages, and even googling in the constant quest for accuracy. Perhaps the fact-checker at the San Francisco Department of Public Works was out sick on the day these words were set in stone at the corner of Alvarado and Noe streets. No problem. New style curb cuts may eventually provide an opportunity to correct the typo. Photo by Leo Holub



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# SCHOOL REPORT

Here's the latest from two local public schools: James Lick Middle School and Alvarado Elementary.

## JAMES LICK

### New Music Program Rocks!

Blue Bear School of Music launched a pilot Rock Guitar Ensemble program at James Lick to provide our students with something that's been missing for too long: instruction in the history and appreciation of contemporary music; music theory; guitar instruction; and an opportunity to perform.

During the first two weeks of the program, a group of sixth-graders studied the history of major movements in contemporary popular music and key elements of music theory with instructor Richard Storbeck, who earned his music degree playing French horn before switching to electric guitar. Hands-on instruction began for real on April 20, when 24 ecstatic kids picked up their gleaming new Stratocasters, turned the amps up to "10," and strummed their first thundering chords!

Kevin Marlatt, executive director of Blue Bear, describes the collaboration that has developed between Blue Bear School of Music, James Lick Middle School, and Guitar Center to get the program up and running, as "simply incredible—we are thrilled to be a part of this innovative program and are committed to its success and expansion so more students can have this wonderful opportunity." Principal Carmelo Sgarlato adds: "A quality, vibrant arts program is vital to the success of students and is also a way to make our school more appealing to families."

The program is proving to be a big hit with students like sixth-grader Emma Lanier, who reports, "We don't call it music class, we call it guitar studio—and I can't wait to play the electric guitar!"

Initial financial support for the program came from funds raised by parents eager to return music to the school and proceeds from Blue Bear's first annual Music for Youth Benefit Concert held in February. The school hopes to raise more money so that the Blue Bear program will be open to students in all grades next year.

If you would like to help James Lick expand this program, please contact Carmelo Sgarlato, Principal, James Lick Middle School, 1220 Noe Street, San Francisco, CA 94114, or e-mail [csgarla@muse.sfsd.edu](mailto:csgarla@muse.sfsd.edu). For more information on Blue Bear School of Music, go to [www.bluebearmusic.org](http://www.bluebearmusic.org).

### Family Art Night at James Lick

On the evening of April 19, our school cafeteria was filled with families creating a public art piece as a gift to the school and the Noe Valley neighborhood. Led by local artists and James Lick community members Paul Lanier and Aiko Cuneo, hands, large and small, fashioned soft clay tiles depicting drawings prepared by our students to illustrate the theme "What I Like About School." After the tile pieces are glazed and fired by the school's art classes, the vertical 18-by-72-inch plaque will be installed on the corner of 25th and Castro streets near the bus stop. Enjoy!

### Earth Day at James Lick

On Sunday, April 23, our families organized a workday to clean up and beautify our school grounds. Look for some

CONTINUED ON PAGE 48

## James Lick Student Wins National Poetry Competition

By Sue Cattoche

With her blonde hair tucked into a tidy bun and a pink cardigan draping her slender shoulders, Audrey Larkin moves with the grace of a dancer, but her hazel eyes hold the enchantment of a poet.

On April 22, the James Lick seventh-grader stepped up to a podium at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., to read "Tides," the poem that won the grand prize for grades seven through nine in this year's River of Words Poetry Contest, a national competition co-founded by former United States Poet Laureate Robert Hass. Audrey took part in a similar ceremony for California and Western regional winners at the San Francisco Main Library on April 8, and was a finalist in the same competition last year.

A student in the James Lick Spanish-immersion program, Audrey has been writing poetry since the fourth grade, working with teachers at her school and through Poetry Inside Out, a division of the Center for Art in Translation, where her poetry teacher is Anita Sagastegui. Counselor Adonis Ali Torres, Carrie Melton, and other James Lick teachers met with Poetry Inside Out early in the school year and were able to secure funding to have them work with several classes. Groups of six or seven students read a poem in Spanish; translate it into English, discussing its meaning as they work; and then each writes an original poem on a related subject suggested by the poem.

Audrey's favorite poets include Pablo Neruda, author of *The Heights of Machu Pichu*; and Dulce Maria Loynaz, a prolific Cuban poet who was a precursor of the Magical Realism movement. Audrey also enjoys hiking in Yosemite and the

## TIDES

My secret is like the tide,  
thundering and roaring  
in my ear.  
How could you?  
Why did you?  
The regret fills my mind  
like a blanket of fog.  
Cold,  
damp,  
endless,  
obscuring all thought.  
My secret is like a wave:  
gigantic, powerful, terrible.  
But then it slinks  
back with the tide  
into a  
dark  
deep  
frozen  
place where it dwells  
until it is  
once again  
pulled out into  
open water.

—Audrey Larkin, 7th grade

Marin Headlands, drawing inspiration and metaphors from nature. She studies at the San Francisco Ballet School, and recently danced in 16 performances of *The Nutcracker*.

Asked how she felt about reading in public, 12-year-old Audrey replied, "I like being on stage!" Then she added, "But sometimes I get just a tiny bit nervous."

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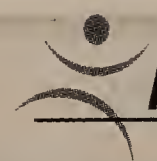
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# SCHOOL REPORT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

colorful new plantings in front of the building!

## May Highlights

**Cinco de Mayo:** You'll hear the music coming from our joyful annual assembly on May 5 as we celebrate Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day, and everything about spring! It's also Staff Appreciation Day, so the PTSA will be treating our teachers and the whole staff to lunch.

**Poetry and Art:** Our students will read poetry and display art dealing with the impact of violence on children's lives at

the Second Annual Poetry and Art Festival of the Youth of San Francisco on Thursday, May 25, from 5 to 7 p.m. The event takes place at the San Francisco Public Library's Main Branch, 100 Larkin Street. Contact Mr. Torres for more information or to see an impressive anthology of the poetry written by our students.

**Carnaval San Francisco:** We've been practicing our steps and beats for several weeks, so look for the colorful James Lick float and our contingent of costumed dancers and drummers on Sunday, May 28, when we join the spectacular, multicultural Carnaval Grand Parade. (If you've never seen it, you'll be amazed!)

**James Lick's Annual Sports Banquet** on May 31 will honor all the talented student athletes who participated in our after-school sports programs, and the dedicated folks who coached them.

—Sue Cattoche



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## FAIRMOUNT

### Revvng Up for FiestaVal

Fairmount Elementary School is gearing up for the annual FiestaVal wingding. All of Noe Valley is invited to join the school community and enjoy an exciting day on Saturday, May 20, at the school campus on Randall Street at Chenery. The event will run from noon through dusk.

Festivities include a silent auction, with a number of prizes donated by Noe Valley merchants and restaurants. Kids will love the free arts and crafts activities, as well as games and contests including the ever-popular obstacle course.

Highlights will also include musical performances by student guitarists and the Fairmount Choir. Also featured will be the school's Ballet Folklorico dance troupe. FiestaVal details and auction items can be found at [www.WindesheimDesign.com/fairmount](http://www.WindesheimDesign.com/fairmount).

### Fairmount Survives the Big One

Fairmount parents are collecting historical photos, which will soon go up on a school web site at [www.FairmountSchoolPTA.org](http://www.FairmountSchoolPTA.org). They are getting a kick out of uncovering pictures of old school buildings, some of which are included in a book at Just for Fun on 24th Street.

The original Fairmount School was built in 1905 and survived the Big One of 1906. The school was later rebuilt in 1977, an event that brought a remembrance from parent Rojelio Rodriguez: "Yes, this brings back memories. I had a paper route on that block back then. Every day, I saw how the old school was quickly demolished and the new school slowly built. I was told back in the fifties they sang a school pride song."

For folks who would like to view old school photos, the San Francisco Public Library web site ([www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org)) has a pic-

torial section of the city's schools, including Fairmount. If anyone knows the Fairmount pride song, please call the school and sing the tune.

### Mayor Newsom Pays a Visit

Fairmount students got some excitement when they came back from spring break and Mayor Gavin Newsom visited the school on Monday, April 17.

Newsom visited classrooms and watched with amazement as kindergartners in the dual-immersion program spoke to him in Spanish.

As he extended his stay and joined students in the cafeteria at lunch, autograph fever broke out. The mayor was mobbed by students asking him to sign everything from notebooks to lunchboxes. Fairmount parent Hydra Mendoza, who is also the mayor's education liaison, accompanied her boss and noted that Newsom regularly visits the city's schools. She said he enjoys meeting teachers, parents, and students, as well as seeing in person the great teaching and learning going on in San Francisco schools.

—Tom Ruiz

### SCHOOL CONTACTS

**James Lick Middle School**  
1220 Noe Street at 25th Street  
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**Fairmount Elementary School**  
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## MORE BOOKS TO READ

A slice of local history called *The Haight Ashbury* and a book for young readers about the "lost boys" of Sudan are among the San Francisco Public Library books highlighted this month by children's librarian Pam Ow and *Noe Valley Voice* bookworm Karol Barske. If you'd like to see if a book is available, call your favorite branch or visit the Library's web site, [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org). You may also flag down the city's bookmobile, which is parked in front of St. Philip's School at Elizabeth and Diamond streets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Note: The Noe Valley-Sally Brunn Library, 451 Jersey Street, is closed for seismic repairs until late 2007. For more information, call 557-4353.

### PICKS OF THE MONTH

#### Adult Fiction

- ◆ A mysterious woman appears at a family's summer cottage and forces the group to reconsider the chance occurrences in their lives, in *The Accidental* by Ali Smith.
- ◆ Gregory Maguire, author of *Wicked*, takes on the Snow White story in *Mirror, Mirror*.

#### Adult Nonfiction

- ◆ San Francisco writer Beth Lisick tells true tales of her "normal" suburban childhood, in *Everybody Into the Pool*.
- ◆ Eleanor Agnew's memoir, *Back From the Land: How Young Americans Went to Nature in the 1970s, and Why They Came Back*, describes the simple, anti-capitalist way of life she and her husband (and two young children) chose.
- ◆ In *Diet for a Dead Planet: How the Food Industry Is Killing Us*, Christopher Cook exposes the corporate control of farms, and offers up a "menu for change."
- ◆ *The Haight Ashbury: A History* is a re-release of Charles Perry's 1984 ode to sex, drugs, and rock 'n' roll in 1960s San Francisco. The Grateful Dead's Bob Weir writes a new introduction.

—Karol Barske  
Noe Valley Voice

#### Children's Fiction

- ◆ Endearing, talkative Goose thaws out quiet Bear's reserve in the gently humorous *A Splendid Friend, Indeed*, by Suzanne Bloom. *Ages 3 to 6*.
- ◆ Mini Grey's *Traction Man Is Here!* highlights a boy's imaginative powers as his Traction Man action figure battles household-object villains. *Ages 4 to 7*.
- ◆ Ramon, a boy who loves to draw, overcomes a crisis of confidence to once again freely create art, in *Ish* by Peter H. Reynolds, who also authored *The Dot*. *Ages 5 to 8*.
- ◆ Told through the voice of one boy, *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*, by Mary Williams, tells the harrowing true story of thousands of orphaned Sudanese boys who sought refuge from war by walking to Ethiopia, and then to Kenya. In 2000, 3,800 young men began

arriving in the United States to pursue new lives and a better future. R. Gregory Christie's paintings won the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor Award. *Ages 8 to 10*.

◆ Reminiscent of classic family stories by Edward Eager, Elizabeth Enright, and Eleanor Estes, *The Penderwicks: A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy*, by Jeanne Birdsall, was given the 2005 National Book Award for Young People's Literature. *Ages 9 to 12*.

#### Children's Nonfiction

◆ Joyce Sidman combines science and poetry, and Becky Prange's gorgeous hand-colored woodcuts bring to life the seasons, plants, and creatures, in the Caldecott Honor-winning *Song of the Water Boatman and Other Pond Poems*. *Ages 8 to 10*.

—Children's Librarian Pam Ow  
Eureka Valley-Harvey Milk Branch Library

### LIBRARY EVENTS

#### Neighborhood Stories & Lapsits

Library patrons will be glad to know that Bethany United Methodist Church, at the corner of Sanchez and Clipper streets, has offered space for the Noe Valley Library's weekly programs for children. *Lapsits*, for newborns to 3-year-olds, will be held Tuesdays, May 2, 9, 23, and 30, at 10:30 a.m. *Preschool story time*, for kids ages 3 to 5, will be offered a half-hour later, at 11 a.m. Meanwhile, the Eureka Valley and other local libraries, along with the Main Branch, will continue their lapsits, lectures, and special events, for both children and adults. Go to [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org) for complete listings.

#### Branch Hours

**Eureka Valley-Harvey Milk Branch Library**  
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**Glen Park Branch Library**  
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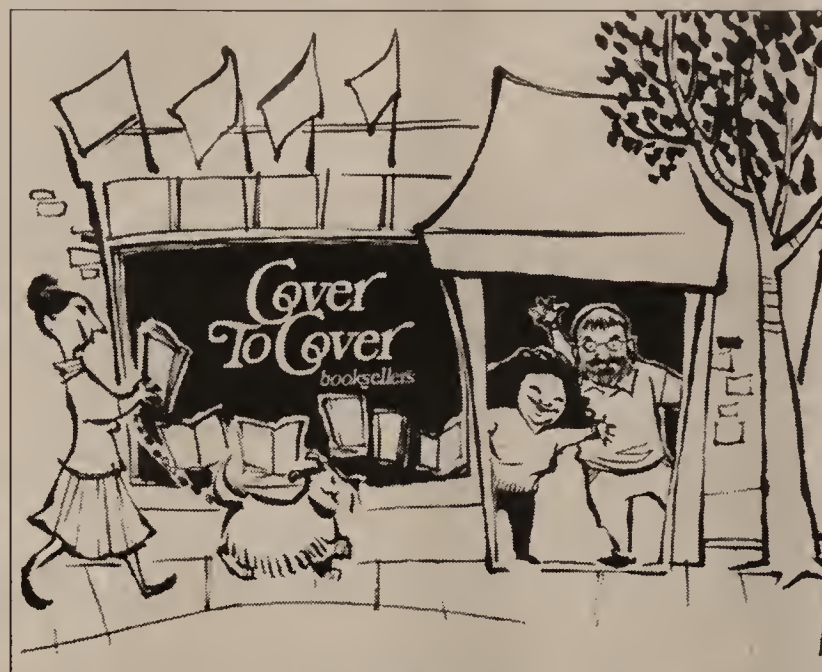


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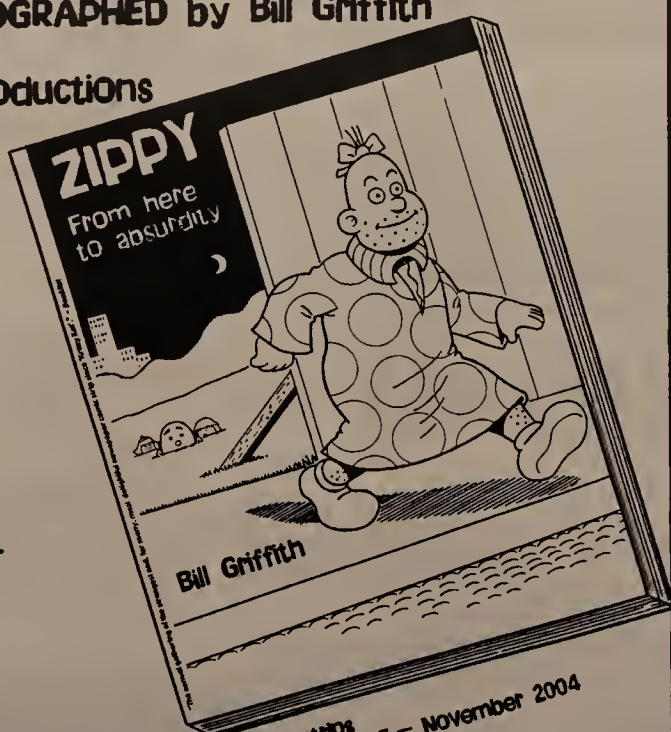
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### SPECIAL EVENTS IN MAY:

Shiraa Bhabha, Illustrator

Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2006 / Time: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Best for children ages 5 and up, but all are welcome!

Local artist, Shiraa Bhabha, will share her first children's book *Closet Ghosts* and teach children how to make their very own Ghost Closet in addition to showing different techniques for creating their very own works of art.

Marsha Diane Arnold, Author

Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006 / Time: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Children of all ages welcome.

Author of more than 8 books for children, award-winning Marsha Diane Arnold will read from her latest book *Hugs on the Wind* and will read some of her other wonderful stories too.

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The next *Voice* will be the June 2006 issue, distributed in Noe Valley on or before June 2. **The deadline for Class Ads is May 15, 2006.** The Class Ads are printed in the newspaper edition and then displayed for one month on our web site: [www.noevalleyvoice.com](http://www.noevalleyvoice.com).

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## and now for the RUMORS behind the news

### Kroger Kaput!

By Mazook

BELLS ARE RINGING in Downtown Noe Valley. Although nobody will confirm or deny it, there is quite a bit of evidence that the chain which owns Bell Market will be leaving Noe Valley soon. Bye bye, Kroger. Bye bye, Ralphs.

In April, Bell's customers started seeing small signs of a change, like no more Ralphs trucks rolling in, no monitor in the parking lot, fresher produce (try the organic asparagus), reorders promised for items like Heinz Steak Sauce, liquidation prices on Kroger brand products, and, of course, a quick refill on the bin of chocolate malted-milk balls.

And there were big things, too, like the workers at the store finding out from their union that negotiations were under way with the parties purchasing the store.

And then there was the late April lunch meeting between our District 8 Supervisor Bevan Dufty and Harley Delano. Delano, as you Rumors regulars know, is heading a group that is trying to buy our Bell and the Cala in Eureka Valley, among other Cala/Bell stores. Interestingly, Delano was part of the group that sold our market to Kroger at the end of the last century.

Supervisor Dufty confirmed that "after constantly calling Ralphs/Kroger people in Southern California, finally they gave approval for and put me in touch with Mr. Delano for a meeting."

Says Dufty: "I really can't say too

much about it, and Mr. Delano has contractual confidentiality agreements, but I know that his group is currently negotiating with the store workers' union, and both sides are optimistic."

Dufty adds that he was quite impressed with Mr. Delano. "He seemed very enthusiastic about taking over these stores [again], and told me he wants the luster of Bell Markets brought back. He also seemed very supportive of organic foods and quality brands, and I learned at lunch that he is a vegetarian."

Perhaps it is no coincidence that Dufty is co-sponsoring (with Supervisor Fiona Ma) a measure to require any new grocery store owner in the City and County of San Francisco to continue the employment of existing store workers for 90 days after the store changes hands. That measure may have passed the Board of Supes by the time you read this.

As for Bell's new ownership, look for notices to be posted at the entrance soon.



WHEN THE STARS MAKE YOU DROOL JUST LIKE PASTA FAZOO! Downtown Upper Noe Valley was the focus of Amanda Berne's "The Inside Scoop" column in the Food Section of the *Chronicle*, which duly scooped Rumors on April 26 with the headline "Italian Renaissance Hits Noe Valley."

Berne wrote: "My dogs are still barking from my recent treasure hunt—I mean, Scoop reporting—tracking down all the new happenings in San Francisco's Noe Valley." This treasure hunt uncovered three new restaurants at the Church Street end of Upper Noe Valley.

"It was the most fun column I've done in a while," Berne says. "I got out of the office and pounded the pavement to find out what was going on."

Berne says her interest was piqued when she got so much response to her sto-

ry about a new restaurant on 30th Street, where Verona used to be. (See La Ciccica, in this month's Store Trek, page 37.)

Then, all of a sudden, "people were calling me and sending me e-mails, asking me what kind of restaurant was going to open in the Mikeytom space, or what was going to happen to Yianni's, or what kind of French restaurant was going to open where Long Island used to be, and who was taking over Hungry Joe's."

Three of those items had been teased in April's Rumors, but Berne's research turned up some additional details, particularly about the former Mikeytom Market space at the corner of Church and Day streets. She reports that Roy Lui and Philip Yip plan to open a California-Asian restaurant in July. The restaurant's name is still under consideration, but the chef will be Alex Placencia, who previously worked at the Nectar Wine Lounge, Colibri Mexican Bistro, and the U Street Lounge on Union Street.

As for Long Island, the *Voice* has confirmed that the new French restaurant is going to be called Bistro 1689—the address is 1689 Church Street—and the chef will be Christopher Pastena, formerly of Bruno's on Mission Street and the East-side West supper club on Fillmore Street.

We also talked to the two brothers, who will be taking over Hungry Joe's, the small café across the street from Mikeytom (1748 Church Street). Eddie Naser and his younger brother Kamal, who are part-owners of the Grind on Haight Street, say they will rename the diner and call it Toast. They'll keep serving bacon-and-egg breakfasts and sandwiches for lunch every day, but plan to expand the menu and add some hearty salads.

"We are famous over on Haight Street for our Caesar salads with chicken and for our hamburgers, so we will bring them to Noe Valley," says Eddie Naser, who used to live in Noe and is happy to be back in

the neighborhood. The brothers plan to open in June, after giving the diner a facelift and a brand new kitchen.

The Yianni story is coming to us piece-meal. One thing we're sure of: Yianni's Greek restaurant, on Church Street near 29th for the past 4 1/2 years, is now closed. And according to Berne, a new restaurant called Joey and Eddy's Seafood (owned by Joseph Manzare) will be taking Yianni's place in the near future.

If all these eateries succeed, where will people park? I guess the answer is for us locals to walk (or ride the J). That way, we can eat more toast.



**BALAT LIKES ICE CREAM:** The April shock in Downtown Noe Valley was the abrupt closing of Isabella's Dessert and Ice Cream Café, after four years at Castro and 24th Street. However, the good news is that ice cream will continue to drip at that corner. (Before Isabella's, the place was Rory's Twisted Scoop for 15 years, and before that, Bud's Ice Cream, the pride of local creameries.)

Isabella's owner, Ray Baluyot, has sold the café to Rami Balat, who says he wants to surprise the neighborhood with the new shop's fare. However, Balat tells us the menu will include his favorite, Mitchell's Ice Cream. Twenty-five-year-old Rami Balat currently works with his father, Karim Balat, at the venerable Noe Valley Deli, on 24th near Sanchez.

Rami says he is respectful of the Bud's tradition. "That corner," he says, "needs some care, which I want to give."



**WANDERLUST:** Noe Valley is losing its only full-service travel agency, Value Vacation, which has been headquartered at the corner of Sanchez and 23rd for the

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# RUMORS

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

past six years. The business was formerly known as Dirt Cheap Travel, founded 26 years ago at 23rd and Vicksburg.

Owner and 26th Street resident Ellen Clark says the corner building was sold at the end of last year. The new owners are planning to do something with the space, and she has to move the business.

But Clark will still be making reservations for us jet-setters. "I am moving the travel agency to the Lakeshore District in Oakland, but I'll still be living here in Noe Valley. I can do a lot from home or meet with my clients in their homes with my laptop," she says.

"I am a vacation destination specialist, so I do high-end travel plans, and currently meet clients not only in Noe Valley but many clients who live in the East Bay," Clark adds. "I work in a virtual world, so I don't need to cross the Bay Bridge that often. However, to maintain IATA ticketing status, I must have a physical office."

☎ ☎ ☎

**BETHANY NOT TRAVELING:** To the relief of many, Bethany United Methodist Church is not going to sell its building on Sanchez at Clipper. Rather, the building will be remodeled. Also, the people in charge will be selling the land at Market and Noe streets, where the church had originally planned to move. Pastor Nobu Hanaoka will be taking a leave and going on sabbatical at the end of June.

☎ ☎ ☎

**EYE ON THE NABE:** Noe Valley will be the lucky neighborhood featured on the CBS Channel 5 (KPIX) "Eye on the

Bay" show on Friday, May 12, at 7 p.m., with a repeat broadcast on Saturday, May 13, at 9:30 a.m.

Show host Liam Mayclem was out on 24th Street in April, interviewing *Voice* co-publisher Sally Smith and chatting with many other locals about the charms of our urban village. Mayclem, who has lived in Noe Valley for 12 years, says he's excited about finally getting a chance to spotlight his own neighborhood.

"Noe Valley's my home and sanctuary, and I wanted to show off my favorite places, like Bliss Bar, Savor, Streetlight where I buy my music, and Phoenix where I buy my books. It's also an opportunity for me to put my friends and neighbors on the telly," he laughs.

By the way, Mayclem, 37, is an Irishman with an English accent, "since my parents are Irish and I lived in Northern Ireland—in Omagh, not too far from Belfast—most of my life, but I was born in London."

Sounds like a perfect Noe Valleyan.

☎ ☎ ☎

**OTHER LOCAL TALENT:** On March 24, Noe Valley poet Kim Shuck graced the crowd at Cover to Cover bookstore with readings from *Smuggling Cherokee*, a book of poems that has already won two awards: the Diane Decorah Award for Poetry and the Native Writers Circle of the Americas First Book Award.

Shuck is the daughter of Rose and Ed Shuck (owners of NoeValley.com) and a graduate in 1969 of the first class of the Noe Valley Nursery School. Kim also went to local schools Alvarado, Everett, Lick-Wilmerding, and San Francisco State, where she became a lecturer in Native American studies. Later, she got a master of fine arts degree in weaving.

"I really enjoyed reading at Cover to Cover," says Kim, "since I remember going to Books Plus [Cover to Cover's predecessor] in the very early 1970s and

reading poetry there. I also used to go across the street to the Woolly Mammoth and run my fingers through all the yarn and then walk up to Plate's Bakery for some cookies."

Kim, who lives on Eureka Street, says her favorite poem in the book is "Home Song," but she thinks you all will especially like "The Roots of This." You can pick up a copy at Cover to Cover for \$12.95.

☎ ☎ ☎

**REBIRTH OF BRADLEY:** Speaking of the Noe Valley Nursery School, it seems that certain preschool parents are returning to a time-tested childbirth approach.

Lamaze is out and Bradley is in, say Ginger Bisharat and Georgia Rue, two moms at the parent co-op nursery school who are (independently) teaching classes in the Bradley Method, the natural childbirth method first popularized in the 1940s by ob-gyn Robert A. Bradley.

What's different about Bradley? "With Lamaze, you distract yourself from the pain through breathing and having a focal point. The breathing is very much in the chest, with different panting patterns," says Bisharat. "We do abdominal breathing in the Bradley Method, which is more relaxing."

Bisharat says the Bradley course, which is 12 sessions long, takes moms-to-be through tips on nutrition, exercise, physiology, and postpartum care. "But another big thing is the importance of the father, husband, or partner acting as the mom's primary labor support, someone she knows and trusts to help her through the whole process."

She says the two instructors will be glad to answer more questions. Call Bisharat at 563-1477 or Rue at 216-3958.

Or you could stop by the nursery school at 1021 Sanchez Street. While you're there, say hi to longtime nursery school director Nina Youkelson. She'll be retir-

ing in June. Bisharat says the parent co-op has settled on a replacement, but they haven't made the person an offer yet, so the moms are keeping quiet about who's going to try to step into Youkelson's storied shoes.

☎ ☎ ☎

**ANSWERS, PLEASE:** As promised, here are the answers to last month's Noe Valley history quiz:

♦ Rite Aid is located where Surf Super Market once was.

♦ The town of Shufat in Jordan is the birthplace of Shufat Market's owner, Omar Kamal.

♦ The East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club began in 1904.

♦ Claire Pilcher was Friends of Noe Valley's first president.

♦ Douglass Park was once a stone quarry.

♦ The End of the Line was a bar, in the spot where La Ciccia is now.

♦ San Francisco's second steepest hill is 22nd Street between Church and Vicksburg.

♦ Panos' was a restaurant on the corner of 24th and Noe, where Pasta Pomodoro is now.

♦ The cable car barn was remodeled into Little Bell Market and then into our Walgreen's (Castro near Jersey). And—my bad—the street south, not north, of Army Street (Cesar Chavez) used to be called Navy Street.

☎ ☎ ☎

**THOUGH I'VE BEEN BAD,** and a little verbose lately, my editors at this paper have put the report on global warming I commissioned from the Noe Valley Bureau of Investigation (NVBI) in my April '06 column online. To read it, go to [www.noevalleyvoice.com](http://www.noevalleyvoice.com) and type "Hugh R. Fludd" after clicking on Search.

That's 30. ■



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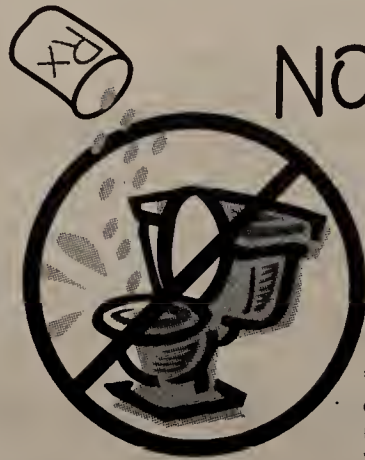
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1750 Noriega Street @ 24th Avenue  
199 Parnassus Avenue @ Stanyan Street  
1899 Fillmore Street @ Bush Street  
825 Market Street @ 4th Street  
1333 Castro Street @ 24th Street  
2550 Ocean Avenue @ Junipero Serra Blvd.  
1189 Potrero Avenue @ 24th Street  
5300 3rd Street @ Van Dyke Street  
965 Geneva Avenue @ London Street

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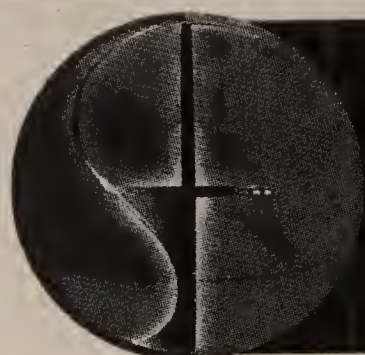


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**SMALL BUSINESS  
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**J**oin the US Small Business Administration and the San Francisco Small Business Commission as we celebrate National Small Business Week from May 15 – 20. We'll have networking parties, forum seminars and neighborhood events to salute entrepreneurs' daily hard work.

## Highlights Include:

- City Hall Kick-Off Event, May 15, 6:00 p.m. Our networking evening to meet new customers and find plenty of leads. We'll also be featuring Flavors of San Francisco, with tastings from outstanding local restaurants, and a Resource Fair. For more information, go to [www.acteva.com/go/cityhall](http://www.acteva.com/go/cityhall).
- How To Start A Business, May 16, morning, afternoon and evening classes available. Workshops held in various neighborhoods, including the Ocean View, Mission and Bayview Districts, and the LGBT Center on Market. Topics covered will include management, financing and resources. For more information, go to [www.acteva.com/go/cityhall](http://www.acteva.com/go/cityhall).
- Leveraging Technology To Grow Your Business, May 17, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., San Francisco Hilton, 333 O'Farrell. Cost of event: \$25. Lunch provided. Brought to you by Microsoft. For more information, go to [www.sbtechnologyinstitute.org/sbdctap/ms.htm](http://www.sbtechnologyinstitute.org/sbdctap/ms.htm).
- Financing for Your Small Business, May 18, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; SF Chamber of Commerce, 235 Montgomery St. Discover the right way to seek financing for your business. We'll discuss loan proposals, financing options and programs for your company's financial health. For more information, go to [www.acteva.com/go/cityhall](http://www.acteva.com/go/cityhall).
- The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce Grand Expo Marketplace, May 17 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. San Francisco Design Center Concourse featuring a reception with more than 100 exhibitors. For more information, go to [www.sfchamber.com](http://www.sfchamber.com).
- Be sure to look for your local merchants' association to wrap up the week with parties in your neighborhood to salute their members. Check with your merchants' association to see what they're planning for Friday night, May 19. For more information, visit [sfgov.org/sbc](http://sfgov.org/sbc).

**F**inally, come out and shop. Area businesses will be setting up Saturday Sidewalk Sales all over San Francisco as part of the celebration, thanks to the organizational support of the SF Small Business Commission.



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#### Castro Area Planning + Action

Contact: Linton Stables, 541-0344, ext. 230  
E-mail: [capa@home4us.org](mailto:capa@home4us.org)  
Meetings: Second Thursday of the month, Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

#### Diamond Heights Community Association

Contact: Betsy Eddy, 239-5776  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 31529, San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: First Thursday of the month, 7:30 p.m. Call for location.

#### Dolores Helghts Improvement Club

Contact: Amy Powell, 647-4228  
Mailing Address: 3732 21st St., San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Board meetings bimonthly; membership semi-annually. Call for details.

#### Duncan Newburg Association (DNA)

Contact: Keith Eickman, 282-8988; Evelyn Martin, 826-6734; Deanna Mooney, 821-4045  
Mailing Address: 560 Duncan St., San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: Call for details.

#### East & West of Castro Street Improvement Club

Contact: Paul Kantus, 647-3753  
Mailing Address: 492 Douglass St., San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: First Wednesday of the month (every other month—call to confirm), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7:30 p.m.

#### Eureka Valley Promotion Association

Contact: Lion Barnett, 255-3624  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 14137, San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Third Thursday of the month (except December), Eureka Valley Recreation Center, 100 Collingwood St., 7:30 p.m.

#### Fair Oaks Neighbors

Contact: Joyce Kurtz, 401-6362  
Mailing Address: 261 Fair Oaks St., San Francisco, CA 94110  
Meetings: Call for information. The annual Fair Oaks Street Fair is always held the day before Mother's Day.

## MORE GROUPS TO JOIN

#### Friends of Glen Canyon Park

Contact: Richard Craib, 648-0862  
Mailing Address: 140 Turquoise Way, San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: Call for details.

#### Friends of Noe Courts Playground

Contact: Laura Norman  
E-mail: [lauranor@yahoo.com](mailto:lauranor@yahoo.com)  
Mailing Address: c/o Friends of Noe Valley, P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146  
Meetings: E-mail for dates and times.

#### Friends of Noe Valley

Contact: Richard May, 206-0231  
E-mail: [rambooks@pacbell.net](mailto:rambooks@pacbell.net)  
Web site: [www.friendsofnoevalley.com](http://www.friendsofnoevalley.com)  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 460953, San Francisco, CA 94146  
Meetings: First or second Thursday of the month (call or e-mail to confirm), Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 7 p.m.

#### Friends of On Lok's 30th Street Senior Center

Contact: Marianne Hampton, 601-7845  
Mailing Address: 205 30th St., San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: Occasional. Call for details.

#### Friends of Upper Noe Recreation Center

Contact: Christina Goebel, 826-7772  
E-mail: [christina\\_goebel@yahoo.com](mailto:christina_goebel@yahoo.com)  
Meetings: Call or e-mail for dates and times.

#### Liberty Hill Neighborhood Association

Contact: John Barbey, 695-0990  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 192114, San Francisco, CA 94119  
Meetings: Quarterly. Call for details.

#### Noe Strolls "Playgroup on Wheels"

Contact: Martine, [noestrolls@aol.com](mailto:noestrolls@aol.com).  
Monthly Stroll: First Tuesday of the month, 1 p.m. To receive stroll locations and notices of other events, e-mail your first name, and your baby's first name and age, to [noestrolls@aol.com](mailto:noestrolls@aol.com) or go to [www.noestrolls.com](http://www.noestrolls.com).

#### Noe Valley Democratic Club

Contact: Rafael Mandelman, 648-4010  
Meetings: First Wednesday of the month; Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 7:30 p.m.

#### Noe Valley Farmers' Market

Co-sponsor: Noe Valley Ministry  
Contact: Paula Benton, 248-1332  
Mailing Address: 4104 24th St., #401, San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Second Thursday of the month, Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez St., 6 p.m.

#### Noe Valley Library Campaign

Contacts: Kim Drew, 643-4695, [kkdrew@yahoo.com](mailto:kkdrew@yahoo.com); Marian Chatfield-Taylor, 626-7512, ext. 103  
Mailing Address: Friends of the

San Francisco Public Library, 391 Grove St., San Francisco, CA 94102  
Meetings: Second Wednesday of the month, Noe Valley Library, 451 Jersey St., 6:30 p.m.

#### Noe Valley Merchants and Professionals Association

Contact: Carol Yenne, 648-3954  
Mailing Address: c/o Small Frys, 4066 24th St., San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Last Wednesday of the month, Bank of America, 24th and Castro, 9 a.m.

#### Noe Valley Parent Network

Contact: Mina Kenvin  
E-mail: [minaken@gmail.com](mailto:minaken@gmail.com) (this is an e-mail resource network for parents)

#### Outer Noe Valley Merchants

Contact: Jim Appenrodt, 641-1500  
Mailing Address: 294 29th St., San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: Call for details.

#### San Jose/Guerrero Coalition to Save Our Streets

Contacts: Don Oshiro, 285-8188  
E-mail: [contact@sanjoseguerrero.com](mailto:contact@sanjoseguerrero.com)  
Web site: [www.sanjoseguerrero.com](http://www.sanjoseguerrero.com)  
Meetings: See web site.

#### See Jane Run Running/Walking Club

Contact: Lori Shannon, 401-8338  
Mailing Address: 3870 24th Street, San Francisco, CA 94114  
Meetings: Sundays, 10 a.m. (Runners meet at See Jane Run to pick up the 5K run/walk route. Info? [www.SeeJaneRunSports.com](http://www.SeeJaneRunSports.com).)

#### Southwest Mission Neighborhood Association (SWMNA)

Boundaries: 24th Street to Cesar Chavez and Fair Oaks to Mission  
Contact: Lori Oshiro, Secretary  
E-mail: [lori@tail-wagging.com](mailto:lori@tail-wagging.com)  
Web site: [www.tail-wagging.com](http://www.tail-wagging.com)  
Meetings: E-mail for information.

#### Upper Noe Neighbors

Contact: Vicki Rosen, 285-0473  
Mailing Address: 169 Valley St., San Francisco, CA 94131  
Meetings: Last Thursday of the month (call to confirm), Upper Noe Recreation Center, Day and Sanchez streets, 7:30 p.m.

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## A Tug of War of the Heart

◆ BY KATHY BRICCETTI ◆

A long time before my children were born, I found a puppy at the flea market. She looked like a caramel in a sea of Hershey's Kisses, and when I stuck my hand down into the large pen on the grass, she climbed over a pile of her siblings to lick it. Although I had come to the flea market for a bicycle, I carried her home in my palm and named her Chesie, for the bit of Chesapeake Bay retriever in her. She went everywhere with me. She was my first baby.

Eight years later I moved her cedar bed from its spot in the bedroom to a corner of the living room, to make room for a bassinet. Soon after, I took the worn towel, coated with her buff-colored hair, off the back seat of my Civic and installed a child's car seat in its place.

Now, fourteen-year-old Chesie is lucky if she gets her dinner on time and a couple of walks a week. When I go to the park these days, I take my sons and leave her behind. It's all I can do to manage two little boys; I don't have the energy for them and a dog that stumbles on the stairs and doesn't hear me anymore when I call her.

I see what's happened. Now I'm reading bedtime stories, refereeing wrestling matches, and

playing catch, so it's become a habit to ignore her. Walking her, combing her, and driving her to the vet for weekly arthritis injections have become chores added to my long list.

Chesie has never protested her demotion; instead, she spends most of the day resting her head on the picture window ledge and gazing out onto the sidewalk. I imagine she's wishing some childless person will come by and offer to take her home—someone who will walk her every day and talk to her in a high-pitched voice. "What a good girl you are," they'd say, scratching behind her ears.

Unlike my children, Chesie doesn't make demands. She doesn't complain, flail, scream, or cry. She just lies on her cedar-chip bed watching me as I walk through the house, thumping her tail on the wood floor as I pass her. But, like a triage nurse, I go where I am most needed.

Perhaps my relationship with Chesie has been a rehearsal for raising children. Petting her, talking in baby talk, throwing balls for her in the park, and nursing her wounds, all those things have taught me how to be a mother. When we get pets after we have children, they're for the kids. They're playmates, and they teach responsibility. But the pets that come before we have

children are for us parents-to-be. They're our guides as we fumble our way into parenthood.

The other day, I came home from work early and pulled Chesie's leash off the hook by the front door. She cocked her head to the side and barked once. I carried her down the stairs, and we slowly made our way around the block. I let her lead and sniff wherever she wanted, and when she tangled the leash around my leg, I gently straightened it. She stumbled when she climbed the curb, but her head was high, and she had a bounce in her step I hadn't seen in years. When we got home I leaned down, rubbed her silky ears, and scratched behind them. And into one ear I whispered, "What a good girl you are."

◆ ◆ ◆

*This essay is reprinted with permission from Using Our Words: Moms and Dads on Raising Kids in the Modern Neighborhood, a collection published last year by the Neighborhood Parents Network, Berkeley, Calif. Writer and book co-editor Kathy Briccetti is a former San Franciscan who now lives in the East Bay with her partner and two sons, ages 13 and 11 (and their new dog, Rosie). Compiling the pieces in Using Our Words, she says, "was a labor of love, an all-volunteer effort to provide a sense of community for parents traveling on the bumpy ride of parenthood." You may order copies by calling 877-648-5437.*



Photo by Pamela Gerard

The Noe Valley Voice invites you to submit fiction, literary nonfiction, poetry or photos for publication on the Last Page. Mail manuscripts, which should be no more than 1,500 words, to the Noe Valley Voice, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, CA 94114. Or e-mail [lastpage@noevalleyvoice.com](mailto:lastpage@noevalleyvoice.com). Please include your name, address, and phone number, and an SASE if you want your manuscript returned. We look forward to hearing from you.